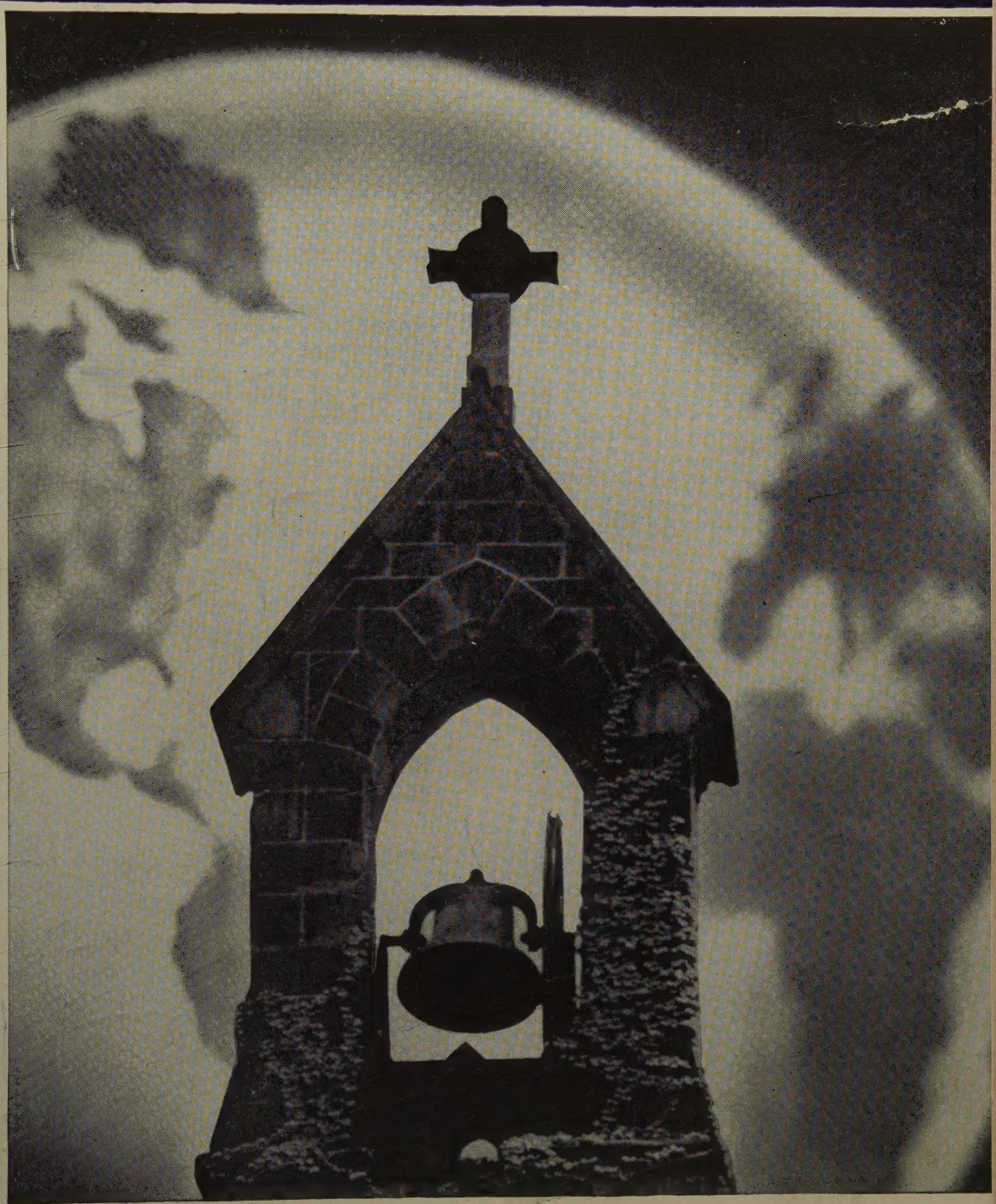
The Pastor

NOVEMBER • NINETEEN FORTY FOUR



THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD

The Pastor

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THE PASTOR'S new format assigns more space for discussing the intellectual currents of the times in the light of the preaching task. Into the December issue will come the first article of this general type. Dr. Edward T. Ramsdell, associate professor of theology and philosophy of religion at Vanderbilt University School of Religion, will begin a series of articles on "The Return to Revelation—a Study in Current Theological Trends." Dr. Ramsdell studied at the University of Michigan, Boston University and the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. He also did graduate work in Germany.

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EDITORIAL

THE Christian Church must learn again how to call out and direct the crusading energies of men. In this task of re-education, the pulpit will find one of its severe tests during the years immediately before us. For Methodist pastors, a significant test will come as we appeal for support of the Crusade for Christ.

In the Middle Ages, the clergy of Europe looked out upon scenes of violence and futility. Men were killing and robbing each other and wasting their strength in bickering and self-seeking. To these men, the clergy said in effect: "Rise out of your selfishness. Forget for once your struggles over little issues. Cease your perverted efforts to live off your fellows. Consecrate your fighting hearts to a cause worthy of your abilities. Liberate the tomb of our Lord from the infidels."

The medieval clergy saw that the Church could not curb men's fighting instincts, but the Church could consecrate men's aggressions to higher purposes. The clergy decided to help men direct their loves and hates rightly, and thereby help men throw off the sorry dissatisfactions of the times. Actually, the Church turned men's minds outward—away from meaningless inner battles to warfare against evil in the great outer world.

Then one of the astonishing movements of history began. Millions of men started following "the way of the Sepulchre." Under the banner of the Cross, these men reached incredible limits of heroism and devotion. They met every weariness and discouragement, and faced every ordeal of starvation, fire and sword.

The clergy of the Middle Ages were mistaken in many things, of course. Modern churchmen see how very incongruous, for example, is the picture of the crusader wading in human blood to kneel at the tomb of Jesus Christ. But it is clear that the clergy of the Middle Ages understood men's capacities for noble and self-forgetful devotion.

Now, The Methodist Church stands on the threshold of the Crusade for Christ. What can it mean to us that the Church of the Middle Ages could impel men to give their lives away in utter devotion to the Crusades?

The Medieval Church called upon laymen for maximum devotion and got maximum devotion! It did not insult men by recommending small, easy tasks! It saw that men were fighting beings, and it gave them a cause for which to fight.

In the beginning of the Crusade for Christ, we must decide what it is we intend to do. As pastors, we look out upon scenes of violence and desolation. Caught in the bitterness and cynicism of the age, men are fighting against the feeling of insignificance. It seems that all the evil of hell has been let loose among us. Now, as pastors, we can say to laymen who are caught in the dissatisfactions of the times: "The Church will let you off easily. Give us a few dollars and go back to your profit-seeking—to your isolated battles for selfish ends. The Church will let you be content forever in your petty affairs."

No, such an appeal will draw the contempt of laymen. They will decide the Church is sissy. What else could they decide in a day when governments are drafting men and sending them out to die? A Hitler comes along and gets the right to subject whole peoples to indescribable hell. Men will despise a church which is too sluggish in its thinking, or too fearful, to call for a transformation of their whole lives. Every story of heroism in this war is proof of the fact that *the Church Militant can gain the allegiance of people.* The human soul was made for heroism. Let the Church wake up to that fact.

Our pulpits are surrounded today by cynical men wasting their lives in all sorts of unworthy efforts—men dying of a feeling of insignificance when a thousand evils need to be combatted. Somehow our preaching must present again the picture of the Christian warrior living in disciplined courage to bring about the will of Christ in the world. This, in the final analysis, is our job.

Let us begin the Crusade for Christ by directing men's attention to the Christ of the Crusade, the One who calls out unsuspected heroisms. He can change our days of cynical confusion into days of disciplined effort.

Our task for the Crusade? *It is to welcome men to the banners of a fighting faith.*

Warrior's

by JAMES W. KENNEDY

Upon the answer to one question depends the future of demobilized servicemen whose hidden hurts will be the main business of the Church in every parish: "What do you mean by God?" James W. Kennedy, rector, All Saints Episcopal Church, Richmond, believes that above all other duties of the pastor is this necessity for interpreting God to returning warriors.

VERY few of the clergy will be called upon for a specialized ministry to the returned service men who will land in government hospitals and rehabilitation centers scattered over the country. Therefore the approach of this brief article will be that of the normal war-time and post-war-time ministry of most of us to the warriors who have already returned or who will return to our communities and churches.

The percentage of the sick and wounded, those who have been or who are hospitalized, will be comparatively small. The same holds also in the average parish church for the percentage of those who will not return. The terrific toll is not yet finished, nor the total score added up, however. But I believe there will be a far more necessary ministry than to the disabled veteran, important and difficult as this is (many of us have already shared a bit of it); or than to the bereaved, who have lost a loved one (and this is a great demand upon our ministry now); or, yes, even than to those who return mentally or physically handicapped in some way. I am referring to our ministry to the hidden needs of those who return without visible mark of war's sweeping tragedy upon them.

The government has made elaborate plans for the adjustment of all war casualties: for their long or short convalescence in wonderful surroundings; for their education up to four years fully paid; for their preparation for a trade or vocation, also with every item of expense provided; and for the care of their families, until the rehabilitation and adjustment are complete. Of course, the pastor will be needed often for advice and encouragement in many of these cases, especially with the families. But even so, his greatest and most challenging ministry will be not with these, but must be (and there will be no choice) with those warriors who return outwardly whole, apparently unaffected by the horror and strain of war, with bold fronts, their youth changed to a kind of maturity, but who, whether they know it or not, are hurt in the unseen regions of the soul.

The tragedies of war are often greatest when these neglected men turn up later, sometimes years later, as war casualties for whom the government assumes no responsibility. The subconscious hurts and terrors of war will out. Our basic responsibility, then, as I see it from my own very limited experience, is for the reconstruction of men's souls. No less a task is before us.

The war will have jarred from their moorings most of those who fought it; they will be floating around, waiting and anxious to tie up to something secure. They will be ripe for the wise pastor, or someone else, to win; and there will be many gospels bidding for their ears. One of these gospels they will probably hear and accept. We must see to it that it is the Christian gospel, the good news of man's complete fulfillment when his life is surrendered into God's hands. Even those who have gained in faith will need much interpretation and clarification of what they believe and why, or the faith which came to them under fire will be lost in the new life they find back home. Some of them will have a kind of fox-hole religion or a "wing and a prayer" outlook or even a "praise-the-Lord-and-pass-the-ammunition" philosophy. Solid grounding for new-born faith is essential while it may still be found. Many will be bitter over what the war has done to them; some of them will hold to resentment and hatred. Part of these last named ones will keep sullen and silent; but the other part of them will be blatant in their discontent and looking for trouble. Their attitude will be anti-social and anti-everything else that comes in contact with their personal "rights."

What then can the Church offer those who are soul-weary and sick? What can the average clergyman do for them? When the warriors return what will they find to comfort them, to guide them, to feed them, to hold them up and see them through? I wish it were possible to write and print and send to each minister in the land a little blue book, pocket-size, labeled *A Manual for the Reconstruction of Men's Souls,* thoroughly indexed to guide to the cure for every ill, and with a nice little formula to follow for the easy settlement of every difficulty.

But it is not so easy as this. The job is far more fundamental than pat answers and pious cliches. The minister will find the right words and will discover the signposts for men to see, only

Return

if he is solidly grounded in his own faith in and knowledge of God through Jesus Christ. There is no substitute for this, nor can the lack be hidden from men who hunger and thirst in the burning, lifeless desert of their desire. No minister can be a pastor to these lost souls, or to men who have come to themselves but are still a great way off, unless he himself is "found," and sure of it, first.

The reorientation and stabilization of these men will depend not alone on social case work, psychology, and ready-made jobs, but on our interpretation of God to them, helping to make sense out of a very muddled world, a world that has seemed contrary to the God of love and goodness about whom they learned in Sunday school long ago. We must get inside of them and follow the pattern of their thoughts, for not all of them will talk. We must practice divine understanding and sympathy. Both in sermons and in counselling, we must keep ever to the fore a God of good will and justice; a universe that is orderly and friendly; and men as God's very own children for whom He cares immeasurably, but who must choose Him before He can fully help them. The Prodigal Son and the Good Samaritan will furnish the key pattern for both sermons and consultations, for in the one we find the heart and core of the Christian religion, and in the other, the outline for the redemption of man.

Few of these men will come to us voluntarily. Most of them will not admit anything is wrong. Therefore we must use all the subtlety God has given us to find openings, make contacts, and throw in the right word so that further conversation will be desired and sought. We can set up all sorts of new plans and organizations for our ex-service men; we can diagram an elaborate work program to assimilate those who return into the life of the local church. We must do these things; but the hurts will not be healed until we've gone below the surface and come to grips with the raw places of men's souls, a job we would rather dodge, but one from which, as already intimated, none of us can escape now or twenty years later.

Some men will have been afraid. Some will be hiding a real sense of guilt. Some will be unwilling to face the imagined monotony of civilian life and will want to escape its responsibilities. Some will be troubled over wives married but love lost. But through every phase of every need there must run for the pastor one theme song: that in Christ is strength sufficient for all man's needs.

No watered-down gospel will suffice for these men who have faced the grim realities of life and death. We must hold to the highest we ourselves know and believe. We must preach and teach both what we have seen and heard and touched with our hands and found workable in our lives. These men are not going to be interested in an easy religion or in a flabby gospel. That which wins them must be as virile as the original gospel and just as applicable to life.

The minister had better begin to prepare himself now for the warriors' return (God hasten the day) by intense self-searching and recommitment to the responsibilities of our Christian heritage and convictions, and to store up Jesus' words and the ways he used in dealing with men. We shall be able to thank God in many instances for the job the chaplains have done to keep intact a remnant of faith in some of our boys. We shall be even more grateful to a wise God who made the human soul so tough it can stand the hell of war which might have cracked it into a thousand pieces and left it broken and useless to wander among the ruins of a destroyed world.

Greatest of all things to deal with is disillusionment about the results of the war, and to give answers to such a question as "What evidence is there of the worth of the struggle in return for our buddies we've seen die?" We must be well grounded in peace aims and plans to be able to offer as much concrete hope as possible. There will be serious questions in the minds of returned veterans about everything from punishment for the vanquished to the removal of tariff barriers; from the federation of nations to the policies of a world court; from an international police force to racial equality.

The spiritual needs of the service man will be met in part by well thought out answers to these vital questions from the standpoint of the Christian religion. We must know the stand of denominations, especially our own, and also the public stand of Christian groups, such as the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America; and we must have our own personal beliefs down in clear and simple form. The rehabilitation of Europe, with its terribly complicated problems of feeding, building, and governing, will also be in the forefront of the returned soldier's thinking.

The days ahead will be busy days for the pastor whose hands are already filled with the neuroses and psychoses and just plain evil of the war's backwash on the home front. But somehow we must summon more strength and make more time and leave not a single one comfortless who turns our way, especially those needy ones from the trackless wastes of the battle front.

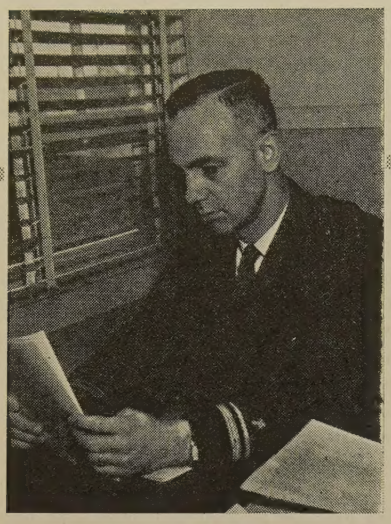
We all want a fool-proof technique, a one-two-three punch, an infallible rule of thumb; but I'm afraid even the experts—and there are only a limited few—will lean heavily on the secret of Jesus for healing men's bodies and souls: *thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.* When the warrior comes home, he'll not be looking for a clinical advisor with office hours from 11:00 to 1:00, but for an understanding friend who will listen as well as talk, one who is filled with the spirit of the Christ.

For Good Samaritans

NO GOOD is to be done by any man to his fellows except at the cost of true sympathy which leads to identification and contact. The literal touch of your hand would do more good to some poor outcasts than much solemn advice, or even much material help flung to them as from a height above them. A shake of the hand might be more of a means of grace than a sermon, and more comforting than ever so many free breakfasts and blankets given superciliously.

—Alexander MacLaren in his famous sermon, "Christ's Touch."

A Naval Hospital



In the Navy, Chaplain Potter ministers to the sick on a large scale. He went into the Navy last year after having served his Methodist congregation at Lake Bluff, Ill., for seven years. When he wrote this article he was stationed at the Naval Hospital near Memphis, Tenn.

THE role of the chaplain in the naval hospital is a fundamental ministry to men's personal and religious needs. Illness forces men from their preoccupations, and compels them, perhaps for the first time in years, to think. With enforced hospitalization, most men revaluate their lives and begin to want the basic questions answered.

Naturally my most important work as a hospital chaplain is calling on the sick. As a Christian minister, I try to be positive, constructive, and hopeful as with faith I deal with patients. Men here are sick of body and sometimes of soul. The two profoundly influence and affect each other. A right relationship with God always increases the patient's chances for recovery. Faith, which I have seen work, is one of the most real elements in the recovery of any patient. It makes a great deal of difference what a man thinks about himself.

I have found in dealing with men that it never pays to censure but to remember constantly that Jesus came, *not to condemn but to save.* I believe that God is on the side of man working in every case to overcome suffering and disease and that He gives to every man who daily seeks it, strength and light.

Aside from calling on the sick much of the chaplain's work in the hospital has to do with counselling, and in most cases men look upon the chaplain as their friend. They have found from experience that the chaplain tries to give them a fair, confidential hearing. In the Navy the chaplain is a free man, a liason between officers and men. At all times the chaplain must be genuine, free from sham or pretense, for men are quick to detect fraud and shallow piousness. The chaplain must protect the human element always.

The doctors in the hospital are working with the physical ills of the patient. The able doctor, by his attitude, suggestions, and care of a patient, is contributing to his spiritual health. The mental and physical needs of the patient overlap and supplement each other. It is difficult to say where one leaves off and the other begins. The chaplain in dealing with the psychic side of the patient is considered by the doctor to be his ally. Doctors often refer men to the chaplain because they know in many cases the chaplain can do things for a patient which they cannot do.

A list of patients who daily are admitted to the hospital is sent to the chaplain. With the name of each patient, are also given his home address, his next of kin, his religion, and a diagnosis of his condition. Patients of the Catholic faith are recorded and sent to the Catholic chaplain.

There was a time when the list was small enough for me to visit each patient when he entered the hospital. On making my first visit I introduce myself to the patient as the Protestant chaplain and try to make him feel that I want to be of help. I ask him if he wants a New Testament or a prayer book. When he is able to attend, I tell him about the hour of the Sunday worship service in the hospital. I also tell him about the excellent hospital library. Depending upon the nature of the case, I suggest other hospital facilities for using leisure. I try to leave each patient with an assurance of the fine care he will receive while in the hospital. Since the hospital has grown so rapidly, my calling has been limited lately to the more critical cases.

As to dealing with the more critical cases, I am convinced that Russell L. Dicks stated the work of the chaplain, as well as of the civilian minister, when he listed in his book *Who Is My Patient?* the situations in which the minister or chaplain may be of help to the patient. Four of these situations I shall discuss briefly. As a Navy chaplain, I have tried to meet them in the most constructive manner.

I

The first is when the patient is facing a surgical operation and is trying to prepare himself for the coming experience. By checking the operating schedule, I know each afternoon the men who will be having operations the following morning. Whether men talk very much about it or not, they tend to be apprehensive and uneasy. There is no such thing as a *minor* operation if it is *your* operation. At such a time the chaplain may drop in and make what seems to the patient to be a casual visit. I have learned that in most cases it is wise not to approach the "intended man" directly but to see the fellow two beds away or to greet the one across the hall. This gives the man a chance to decide just what he wants to get off his chest to the chaplain.

I usually address the critically ill

...s My Parish

By TRUMAN W. POTTER

patient with a leading question such as, "Well, how goes it today?" Most generally he will say, and often with a sense of pride, "Tomorrow I am going to have an operation." As he gives me a chance I try to minister to his need and to leave him with peace of mind and a sense of assurance in the doctors' judgment and the nurses' skill.

II

The second situation in which the chaplain can greatly aid is when men are handicapped or face long convalescent periods. Most men lack the imagination and creative ability to fill long days of convalescence without help. The chaplain, by regular calling, can help them to remold their attitudes and get ready to face life again. He can help them to face even invalidism without rebellion and loss of self-respect. He may help to do this by a friendly interest, an occasional prayer, or a story of someone who faced a similar handicap. He may make wise use of the Scripture and Scripture reading.

In these situations the chaplain, more than anyone else, can help men to pick up again the tangled threads of their broken lives.

III

A third situation in which the chaplain can serve is in ministering to patients or to the families of patients who are facing death. My policy has been not to tell a patient how critical his illness may be. I feel that that is up to the judgment of the doctor. I am always glad to take a man's confession of Christ and to have prayer which commends him to the love and care of God. A prayer hinged on a verse of the Scripture, such as *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble, or . . . though I walk through the valley of the shadow . . . thou art with me,* seems to be of most help to the patient. If a man has a religious background, the Scripture speaks to his subconscious mind things which I do not have to say. Prayer for the seriously ill must always be brief, affirmative, and full of faith. Usually after prayer with a critically ill patient one can see the relaxation, slower respiration, and the loss of nervous tension begin to be evidenced.

As soon as a patient is put on the critically ill list, his next-of-kin is immediately notified. If his condition does not improve, relatives may come to the hospital to see him. When the family comes, the chaplain helps to look for their needs and to familiarize them with hospital routine. If the patient is not going to recover, the chaplain may be of great help by being with the family during the last hours.

There are always telegrams to be sent, papers to be signed, and information as to final arrangements assembled. It is here that the family depends on the chaplain for counsel. I usually take them to my office where the medical officer in command of the hospital and the executive officer meet them and express their regrets. The chaplain gives to the family in this hour of need the personal help of a minister. Among my most cherished notes are those of appreciation from parents whom I have helped in such circumstances. Here words seem futile, but the presence of a friend speaks great comfort.

IV

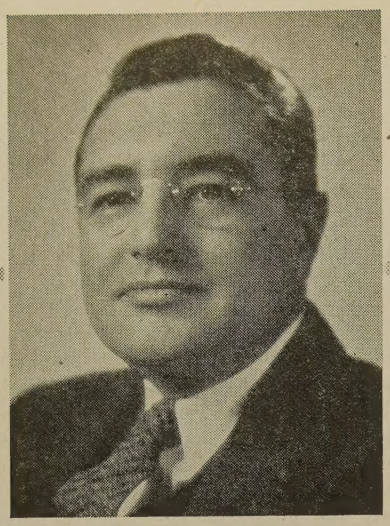
The last of the chaplain's duties are those of domestic and personal situations in which men become involved. These run the gamut from faithless wives to the care of a sick baby. The Navy has resources for helping any man in need if the man has a clear record. Often the chaplain knows from experience something to do and can counsel effectively. Even though it may be an impossible situation, the man is relieved by having someone listen to his problem. The art of listening to the problems which men bring to you has real therapeutic value. The Navy saying, "If you have troubles take them to the chaplain," has value both for the chaplain and the men. The chaplain may be able to help, and he will always listen. A wise chaplain moves about where men may see him. In systematic calling (in wards) most of the needs of men are discovered. Otherwise only the men who are able to move about make the effort to reach the chaplain.

The hospital chaplain is often used in the educational program for the corpsmen and the WAVES who do a great deal of the nursing work in the hospital. A brief orientation speech by the chaplain introduces the religious program of the hospital to each new draft. The chaplain also has a one-hour session with each new class to interpret his efforts in the hospital and to indicate to the incoming class how they may be on the watch for signs of spiritual need and may thereby aid him in his work.

The chaplain has great opportunity for the wise distribution of religious literature. In my own calling I use *The Upper Room, The Link,* prayer and devotional books such as *Forward Day by Day* and the New Testament. These books carry a religious impact and become tools in the hands of the men who pass them on to their associates. The men make wide use of the Sunday literature table. Often the free tracts have opened the way for a helpful ward visit later when there could be better opportunity for discussion of religious problems of patients.

The Navy has given me an unlimited opportunity to minister to the men in this hospital (Millington, Tenn.). I have had the fullest co-operation from the medical staff and the officers in command.

My limitations have been the limitations of the minister in civilian life, one of these being the lack of time to do all the things I see that need to be done. But I shall press on in my high calling. As I have received of the grace of God, I pray that I may minister in that spirit of grace to other men in this grave hour.



Social Agencies: Arms of

Organized religion needs the case worker's realism, while social work needs the soul of religion, says Pastor Humbert, a "layman" in social work, whose years of service in city pastorates have been characterized by close co-operation with social agencies. He serves Trinity Church, Youngstown, Ohio.

BY RUSSELL J. HUMBERT

IT is a truism, I suppose, to say that organized religion needs the social agency, and that the social agency needs the contribution of organized religion. Yet in this statement we find a history of the development of both the Church and social agencies as we know them today.

A specific philosophy of relationship between the social agency and the Church has always been a part of our church program. The Church was the pioneer in the field of social work, and it is a well established fact that the institutions of mercy were an outgrowth of that organism known as the Church.

This fact has been developed into a principle and is well stated by Reinhold Niebuhr in his lectures, *The Contribution of Religion to Social Work*. He says, "It is the business of the Church and other idealistic institutions to pioneer in the field of social work and to discover obligations which society, as such, has not yet recognized, but to yield these to society as soon as there is a general recognition of society's responsibility therefore." Let us examine how the Church and social agencies can make, and do make, a distinctive contribution to each other.

Organized religion needs the tempering influence of the social agencies. By tempering I mean the tinge of realism you find in both the case worker and the worker in group work agencies. Over against the winsome and many times not too intelligent benevolence of the "basket packing" church school class, we need the realism of the case worker. This realism does not minimize the benevolent impulse; it merely seeks the answer to the complicated question: "What is best for the person we are attempting to help."

The Church can maintain its historical idealism plus a willingness to meet specific problems of real people. A morning worship service is important. Yet we must not lose sight of the fact that it is too often the scattering shotgun method instead of the rifle shot method where we hit specific needs in a vital manner. The personalism of the social case worker can help us here in the field of organized religion. It is more than a matter of keeping records, it is a matter of attitudes, which is very well exemplified in the type of counseling which is done by many modern ministers. The relationship of the minister to the social agency can be pointed up and improved.

Organized religion can maintain a theology plus an understandable interpretation of that theology to all of life. Herein the Catholic Church excels and never falters. We may not agree with the theology or even the end result, but they are consistent in that they always have a theological basis for all social actions. Here the social agencies can help us put our way of thinking about God to a real test. A concept of God which makes Him more than an elongated blur and more than a supergrandfather is the kind of theology which will stand the test of those who work in our social institutions.

Organized religion must maintain its individuality plus a united front with all agencies designed to help people. For instance, the child and family agencies, the Goodwill Industries, the court worker, and all character-building agencies are very definitely those to which the minister can turn for help as he serves his people.

The wise minister is one who knows when to refer the person or family needing help to the proper agency. We must always remember that we are not social workers or doctors, and we will be most helpful as we guide our people into these established social agencies for help. In addition to this, we must remember that the Church is unique in being the only institution which has as its sole business the building of Christian character.

Social agencies and social workers need the leavening influence of religion. This may sound presumptuous; yet it is an observation based upon the many statements made by social workers, and it is their conviction in which we concur.

The trained social worker is constantly attempting to find a means to accomplish a spiritual end. Here the Church can help find that spiritual end or goal to be accomplished. In the American Red Cross Home Service Department, the case worker is trained to see the entire family situation in which a specific problem exists. It is not merely a matter of helping a man in service get back to see his sick wife, child or mother, but how can the entire family situation be helped, even if the man does not get his leave. The social worker is helped by the leavening influence of the Church to see this total picture.

Social work needs the soul of religion. This is almost the specific statement made by a case worker in a panel discussion a few weeks ago when the child and family agencies of our city were discussing the future needs of the child and the family. This was more than an academic statement; it was a longing for those spiritual resources

...e Church...

which unify and integrate the person into a balanced, useful citizen. There has been a tendency on the part of some social workers to feel that they have all the answers and that religion is good pabulum for the comfortably rich. Over the horizon is breaking a new light, in which we see the vast majority of social workers beginning to feel their sense of mission as that of a spiritual guide.

Now specifically how can the Church work with social agencies in the community? First of all, the minister can become acquainted with the use of the social agencies of his community. We should make it our business to visit the agencies and to learn their personnel, and we can read literature about their history and function in the community.

The minister can help his people know the social agencies. To this end visits can be arranged for small groups to visit the agencies and see them in the operation of their work. We should not limit our interest to church-related institutions, but should see them all—public, private, Catholic, Jewish and Protestant.

The minister can join the Council of Social Agencies or the social workers' club, and he can make himself available to do any task with the social agencies which his time schedule will permit. This is a real part of the ministry because it is work with the arms of the Church.

The minister can utilize the social agencies of the community not as a last resort to help his people in need, but as resources to serve the total person.

The minister can make his church available to the social agencies, urging his members to become active in the use of their time, energy, and money.

It is my conviction that with the impending problems of veterans and of many other tensions caused by the war, we must more and more function as a community, each and every agency making itself available to meet the needs of people. Organized religion is facing an acid test of its ability to pioneer and then work with those agencies which are better fitted to carry on the work once it is started.

The Chapel, First Methodist Church, Boone, Iowa
Edwin A. Briggs, Pastor

The director of the Interdenominational Bureau of Architecture answers some practical questions for pastors who are planning building programs.

Building Debts Are Unnecessary

BY ELBERT M. CONOVER

MONEY again is freely flowing about the country. Millions of dollars are being spent under the stimulus of this spurt of possible prosperity. Pressed by almost desperate needs for better buildings and equipment, many churches are planning to erect additions, to renovate existing buildings and erect new edifices. Many are asking, however, are we about to face another orgy of church debts? Will local church boards plunge into building programs that will retard rather than aid the kingdom's work?

It is never necessary to have a church building or improvement debt so heavy that it becomes a handicap to the regular work of the church or an embarrassment to the denomination.

The first essential of a successful church building enterprise is to have a sane, sensible, and reasonable building program. By this we do not mean good blueprints and specifications. A building program means the detailed statement of needs for rooms and equipment. Much careful study and promotion needs to be done before blueprints are prepared.

It is now possible to bring to bear upon any church building problem a consulting service that is based on experience with hundreds of church building problems of every kind.

Too often church boards, tired from their daily tasks and wholly inexperienced in church building programs, in an evening meeting, assume a "we know what we want" attitude, and set forth a building program that may involve their congregation in a hampering debt.

We offer some steps in the procedure of a church building enterprise that should be successful, not only financially, but as a means for continued spiritual growth.

First of all get efficient church building counsel so that the best possible program will be developed for the ministries of worship, preaching, evangelism, and Christian education.

With the aid of expert experienced counsel, write the list of needs. Investigate architectural service; develop a Christian program of stewardship.

Have tentative plans prepared by a church architect of proven ability. Have the plans so arranged that not more than a unit that may safely be financed need be contracted for at one time.

By congregational decision insure that the debt on the project shall never exceed a stipulated amount.

Promote and lead the entire enterprise as an important endeavor in the work of God.

Let the church now aggressively take up its task of building the House of God suitably and adequately to render the ministries which the community has a right to expect of the Church.

Recorded Music--Community Service

BY JAMES R. UHLINGER

The pastor of First Methodist Church, Shenandoah, Iowa, has discovered that music from his church tower strikes chords of deep response in a war-weary people.

THE other day I was tired and discouraged as I walked home from work past your church. Suddenly over the loud-speakers on the church tower I heard the beautiful strains of "The Holy City." My thoughts went back to Jerusalem and to the City of God. I became strong again within. The playing of the record on that particular day was truly a blessing from God directly to me."

So reads a letter written in appreciation of the amplification of good recorded church music from the tower of our church.

When the war came, we decided to put to daily use a $1,000 amplification system which had previously been used for a few minutes on Sunday morning and on a few special occasions. The library of records has been increased from a single recording to more than fifty records which are now being used seven days a week.

Rather than simply to play the hymns for the pleasure of the general public, we tried carefully to build up in the minds of the church people, and of those who passed the church at noon and night, that during the time the music was being amplified persons who heard it were to pray for their relatives or friends in the armed forces and for the coming of a righteous peace. This has become a tremendous factor in our community life, for the people have been taught to pray daily for men and women in the service.

In an entirely modern mode, "The Angelus" is brought gracefully and forcibly into human experience again. A sermon built on the theme of the Angelus renewed the venerable custom in the minds of the congregation. The use of the famous picture by Millet gave dignity and realism to the contemporary adaptation of the habit of prayer at noon and night.

There is no need, however, to be bound by the past. A survey of the community life revealed that there were far more people on the streets and out-of-doors at five o'clock in the afternoon than at six. So the records are played at noon and at 5 P.M. As soon as the whistles stop blowing the music starts. There has been no temptation or request to have the morning Angelus carried out by playing the hymns at 6 A.M.

The first source of record supply is the company engaged in making special recordings which are advertised to be designed especially for amplifying purposes. A dozen companies in America are offering their products to the churches. The recordings consist of hymns and more or less familiar church music interpreted by certain instruments. There are chime records, vibraharp records, chime and vibraharp records, organ records, carillon and bell recordings, and numerous other combinations. Some of these are very good, and some are shoddy second-rates.

The advertising argument is that no other records are as good for church amplifying use as these specially designed products. Sometimes that proves to be true, but often it is decidedly false, for some of these "special" records do not begin to compare with a good record taken off the shelf of the music store.

The second source of supply is the ordinary record bought through regular commercial channels—to be specific, Victor, Columbia or Decca records. Here the selection is wider, the variety greater, the quality dependable, and the satisfactory "wearing" appeal very acceptable. The cost is much less.

Among this class of records are several albums which have proved to be popular from the first playing. The All-Girl Orchestra Album of Church Hymns is as good as anything offered at any price. "Sing America," the album used by our chaplains, is available through The Methodist Publishing House. Fred Waring's Glee Club album of familiar hymns and religious songs is lighter in quality but adds variety to the collection. Dick Leibert's "Organ Reveries" appeals to those who do not care to hear singing voices over the air by amplification.

As a rule, solo voices do not meet the approval that instrumental and group voices rate. Yet, the opening letter refers to Richard Crooks' rendition of "The Holy City." To miss John Charles Thomas' interpretation of "The Lord's Prayer" is to impoverish the soul. In the midwestern community many passers-by like to hear Thomas singing "Home on the Range."

Some records have a strange quality of striking deep into life on certain days. On cloudy days "Deep River" and "I'm Goin' to Tell God All My Troubles" go well. When flowers are in bloom "Spring Song," "Waltz of the Flowers," "Trees," and "Dance of the Hours" have genuine appeal. At the close of the day the New World Symphony selection "Goin' Home" is appropriate.

Before the war the church amplification idea was spreading like wildfire. Priority rights are not now available to churches to install amplifiers. It pays to buy good equipment. Cheap installations usually give cheap results. The music must be clear, vibrant, and worthy of coming from the Church, or it should not be put on the air at all.

Commercial installations become rather expensive. Often a local member with good electrical training can help smaller churches render a real service with much less investment. Every amplifying system puts the music on the air in its own peculiar fashion. Hence, the records that sound good on one system may be horrible on another system.

Ideally, each record should be played experimentally until its best set of playing adjustments is determined. Speed of the turntable, volume of sound, and treble-bass blending are among the factors to be noted on each record if real perfection is desired. In making these tests, auditors should be stationed outside the church at three points: close by, at a medium distance, and at the extreme point of reception. This procedure is the only way to be perfectly fair to the amplification system, the record which is used, and the person who hears the recordings.

A Rural Church Comes Back!

By Thomas M. Robertson

"Everybody worked, and enjoyed it," says Pastor Thomas M. Robertson in referring to the rehabilitation of the Methodist Church, Pickett, Okla. Since finishing his job of rebuilding Pickett Charge, he has entered the Army Chaplaincy. He is stationed at Camp Bowie, Texas.

PICKETT is an average rural district in southcentral Oklahoma. The conditions are much the same as one will find in almost any of the rural states. Pickett began to take on the aspects of a settled community around the turn of this century.

In 1906, two acres of ground were purchased on which was built a frame building, 24x36. Funds were solicited, and the work was done by the people in the community. The building was used for a school house, as well as a church, until 1911 when the district built a new school building. The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, had bought the two acres of ground.

Pickett remained a point on a regular circuit until 1930 when Vanoss Circuit of which it was a part was abandoned. An effort was made to dispose of the Pickett property but because of legal technicalities the clearing of the title was worth more than the price it would bring. So the project was abandoned. (The title was cleared during our period of rehabilitation.)

From 1930 to 1939 Pickett became one of those typical rural communities where men went to "get some experience." Preachers of questionable ability, and of conflicting theologies, tried their hands at Pickett. Debates were held between the competitors—Holiness groups, Freewill Baptists, and Church of Christ. There was much demonstration of fervor, but nothing was done about the deteriorating property. And for three years before 1939, when our work was begun, there had been no Sunday school. It had been abandoned for ten years by the legal owners, and for three years by all others.

When I made inquiry, about the middle of June, 1939, relative to a place where we might work, I was informed that there were no places available in the district that would support a minister. But it was explained that there were abandoned churches all over the country and that we could take our choice, and "get along somehow until conference time." Pickett was selected. On July 2, we conducted our first service.

It was a Sunday evening service. One gasoline lantern had been obtained, and it was a temperamental thing! Part of the time we had enough light so that we could see each other. The congregation consisted of one elderly woman and about thirty young people ranging from probably ten to twenty-five years. And they had no conception of what church meant.

Beginning this first Sunday in July we visited the people during the afternoons in their homes and in their fields, and conducted services every evening at the church for one month. We had no conversions, nor additions to the church. In fact, we hadn't been able to reorganize a church. I appealed to their sense of community pride and obligations. During that month I also conducted a survey of my own, and discovered 200 families living in the area, and there was not an organized church serving them. When we held Sunday

These photographs of the old and new structures of Pickett Church reveal something of the achievements of a group of people who used native resources to build their own sanctuary. A proud churchman snapped the new structure even before the grounds were cleared.

school on July ninth (thirty in attendance), quite a number of the children under ten years old had never been to a Sunday school.

While getting around in the area, I located plenty of native trees: cottonwood, sycamore, elm, oak—also a sawmill. And on Sunday morning, August twentieth, I challenged all the men present who would like to have a resident minister at Pickett to meet me the next morning at the "store" with their saws and axes. Five of them were there. That day we cut trees out of which was sawed enough lumber to frame a four room parsonage. The men's Bible class of First Methodist Church, Ada, Okla., bought the drop siding. The Rev. C. B. Holland, then pastor of Asbury Methodist Church in Ada, assisted us in many ways by locating used materials.

On December 9, we moved into the parsonage. It was not completely finished for two years. As material and labor were priced at that time, the building was worth $1,200.

Through that winter, because of bad weather and roads, attendance at Sunday school and church declined, but I went deeper than the weather for the cause. Transportation was an item to be considered, but the building and facilities were first. The openings were not worth new windows, so we nailed boards over the bottom half. If the weather was cold at all, the building could not be warmed. Before the winter was over they wanted a new church. I had assured them that if they wanted one they could have it. I knew that they did not have the money.

I believed that the Pickett area was large enough to support one modern equipped church, and made plans to build it. Some of the people were convinced that we should start building as soon as possible. We elected a building committee, and I explained to them that we would build as the money and material came in.

On May 2, 1940, excavation for the basement was begun. There was $60 in the church treasury. The county dug the basement; we obtained the use of the county rock-crusher, quarried our own limestone rock and crushed them, borrowed form lumber, asked for and received two hundred sacks of cement from a company in Ada, got reinforced steel from a salvage pile, and brought to the top of the ground a ten-inch wall, from an 18x30-inch footing. The forms were removed just before the meeting of the annual conference in McAlester, Okla., in October. Thirteen dollars of the original sixty was still in the church treasury, though it was an $860 investment.

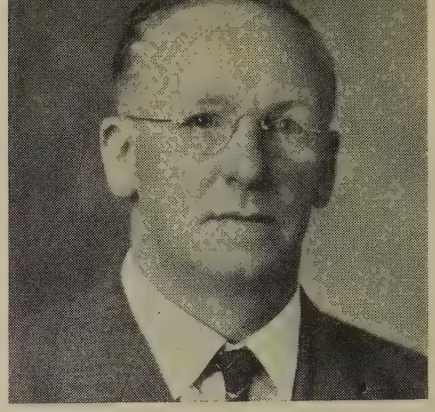
When we were hauling logs to the mill to be sawed into lumber for the parsonage, we picked up a slab, turned the flat side up, and made an altar bench, and during the summer of 1940 the people met often around that altar, kneeling in the saw dust.

I don't want to leave the impression that it was all easy, but then we did not expect anything easy or glamorous when the task was undertaken. As we progressed, it did become easier. The winter of 1940 was better than the winter of 1939; interest was higher, Sunday school and church attendance was better. But this did not bring satisfaction; there was much to be done.

By the spring of 1941 we were ready to start the walls of the building. A chart was made, representing blocks, and when we had enough money to purchase a thousand blocks, they were delivered. A lime company of Ada donated unslacked lime, and we still had several sacks of cement. We made mortar! The preacher in charge laid the blocks. There were 8,000 of them all together. The day before the meeting of the annual conference at Shawnee, Okla., in October, 1941, the last of the blocks were laid up to the plate line. And by conference time, 1942, the roof (a $1,000 investment) was on the new church building.

Perhaps it should be explained how material and labor were obtained. The labor problem was easy: the people and the preacher did the work. The material was easily available in the regions around Pickett. In southeastern Oklahoma, in the pine country, there were numbers of small mills operating, turning out unfinished pine lumber which could be purchased without priorities. There was a planing mill in Ada and I bought the unfinished lumber at the mills, hauled it to the planing mill and had it finished. The floor joists and sub-floor in the sanctuary were sawed from native trees in the community; the pews were made from native material also. The pine flooring was bought in Ada on priority.

Everybody worked, and enjoyed it. Friends outside the community who contributed money and material became one with us. And they were all there, on the second day of May, 1943, just three years from the date the excavation was begun, when Bishop Charles C. Selecman preached at the eleven o'clock hour, and dedicated the church and parsonage in the afternoon.



FOR many years I had longed to co-operate with other pastors in promoting a spirit of denominational unity among local churches. In former pastorates I had been able to co-operate with the pastors of other denominations to a limited extent, but not until I went to Oxford, N. Y., did I realize my dreams of complete co-operation and fellowship.

Oxford is a small community in a rural section of about 1,600. There are, in addition to the Methodist Church, of which I was pastor, churches of three other denominations—Baptist, Congregational, and Episcopal. The people of Oxford have a singleness of civic spirit which made co-operation easy.

From the first week I worked closely with the Baptist minister in union Sunday evening services and union prayer services. I preached in his church and he preached in mine. Before long we were able to get the splendid co-operation of the other two denominations.

Indicative of the people's interest in our plans for unity is the fact that while I was in the Oxford pastorate two ministers were called to the pulpits of the Congregational and Episcopal churches on condition that they would work with the pastors of the other denominations.

The two men who came took hold of their work in a fine way. They made suggestions for closer co-operation. The Congregational pastor suggested that we have a prayer service in one of the parsonages every week, and follow the prayer session with a devotional talk and discussion of our co-operative efforts. Those prayer services together eliminated some of the chances for misunderstanding which might otherwise have arisen. We always found them helpful in acquiring the mind of Christ which is so essential for the

Where the Ecumenical Church Begins!

Baptists, Catholics, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, and Methodists found a basis for work together on the plane of everyday in Oxford, N. Y. Methodist Graves tells how it was done. He is now superintendent of the Children's Home of the Wyoming Conference, Binghamton, N. Y.

BY NORMAN B. GRAVES

justification of a Christian's experience.

We called a meeting of all the church laity, including the Roman Catholics, and planned the united work where we should go along together. Officers were elected and various projects undertaken. Up to that time all the churches except the Methodist had their annual canvass in November, so at this meeting we decided to make the canvass together. With this widening of cooperation we entered wholeheartedly into it. Once a year we had a lay leaders' meeting, with the ministers attending, which was organized as an inter-church council in which we planned what we could do together.

A section of the rural community was agreed upon for a religious census. The four ministers and designated laymen had made previously a complete census of the village of Oxford and had, in a community meeting, assigned to the respective pastors the cards indicating preference for their particular church. The rural visitation for religious census was taken by the pastors who went in two's. Afterwards each card was looked over, and if a family had members of different denominations, the cards were duplicated and given to the pastors concerned.

Naturally some non-churchgoers were found and opportunity for spiritual ministrations by one of the ministers was the result. There was not the slightest suspicion or misgiving about intentions or activities. There was very little transferring of church letters, and when there was, the pastors concerned discussed it.

Like many communities, our community found itself up against war conditions. The heating of our churches was viewed with patriotic concern, and the Baptist, Congregational, and Methodist churches decided to join their congregations and meet in the central school house for Sunday morning services during the nine weeks from January to March.

The ministers made a schedule of these services and each of the three men preached in turn, while one had charge of the service and told the children's story, and the other taught the combined adult class in the church school and prayed the pastoral prayer.

The arrangements for classes by age, and for the teachers who came from all the church schools, were decided in committees. We experienced no real difficulty. Instead of a small church school and congregation in each church, there was an average attendance of between two and three hundred in the union meeting. Expenses were met by the loose collections. The school board allowed us the use of the auditorium and some rooms for ten dollars the first year of our experiment and for fifteen dollars per Sunday the second year. There was a splendid feeling and a fine atmosphere in the services as each minister took his turn preaching, and the congregation enjoyed the change each Sunday.

The second winter the Episcopalians were invited to join our Sunday morning services, but because they have to keep heat in their church (it is a stone building and the frost affects the plaster), they could not participate. We all understood their reasons.

The Episcopal Church has certain customary services which have always been held and which play a very important part in their church year. The other churches shared in those services whenever it was possible. A united communion under the direction and in sole charge of the rector was a wonderful experience.

Then there was Lent coming along. In late fall we proposed a series of Lenten services. Each minister engaged some prominent preacher of his denomination, and consequently we had a fine series of services, with no visiting preacher in his own denominational pulpit except in one case. A united choir of thirty voices sang each time as they had done in our previous morning gatherings. The last week before Easter three united services were held in the evenings. On Thursday evening, Holy Communion was observed at the Methodist church. Both the Episcopal rector and the Congregational pastor shared in its administration in the Methodist form and ritual. We brought to a climax our wonderful time with a musical service on Easter in the evening.

Our community's part in the World Day of Prayer was, of course, led by the women from all the churches. They were invited to hold this service in the Roman Catholic Church. All the Protestant pastors were in the congregation, and the church was filled to capacity.

In our work together, the four pastors treated each other in the spirit of the text, *in honor preferring one another.* This spirit of fellowship had its influence on the community. When one of us spoke on some ministerial action, it was always with the feeling that the other preachers were entirely with him.

Yes, they were four wonderful years! They have left in my life a glorious memory of what can be done when a life-centered religion predominates over one that is doctrinally directed. To me it was a real "Oxford Movement."

Slants on the secular

ROGER BABSON, a statistician often quoted by churchmen, wrote in his newspaper column on September 22: "A spiritual awakening is needed to raise not only the national income but the income of the entire world."

All churchmen will agree with Mr. Babson that a spiritual awakening is needed, but many churchmen will not agree with the idea of equating a spiritual awakening with prosperity. This kind of thinking, we believe, is letting us down today. We have been told to be religious because religion will bring success, good health, and prosperity! And into our vocabulary have come such expressions as "Bank of Heaven," "stock in the Kingdom," and "rich dividends."

Mr. Babson, who is a loyal churchman, could serve us better if he would quit talking about religion and the best paying stocks in the same breath. Tell us, Mr. Babson, to be Christian because Christianity is the eternal truth. Tell us more about the pain and sacrifice of "unsuccessful men" who have gone down fighting for the Christian gospel.

ONE of the best pieces of writing that has come out of this war appears in the October 7 issue of *The Saturday Evening Post*. From a faraway island in the Pacific, S/Sgt. Hobert Skidmore wrote refuting the idea that American soldiers need to do more hating. We've heard psychiatrists, preachers, and columnists discuss this subject of hatred in wartime, but we knew the facts were not really in until the G.I.'s themselves discussed it.

What makes the article in *The Post* a great one, however, is the picture which it gives of a certain type of idealistic, humanitarian soldier who will return from this war, in whom charity is greater than hatred, "And patience is great, and tolerance." This G.I. has gone without food in order that terrified children might eat; he has spread democracy and Christianity and ready laughter in all the lands he has touched.

Perhaps this G.I. has been too much ignored in this war. But he is the one who can awaken Christian forces to their precious opportunities for serving around the earth. He will be a missionary to our churches.

THE 1944 *New International Index* shows that in 1943 the favorite radio programs of Americans were comic ones, with Fibber McGee, Bob Hope, the Chase and Sanborn program, Jack Benny, and Red Skelton in the lead. Classical music and news broadcasts received the lowest percentage of listeners. The day-time radio programs consisting primarily of soap operas have about half of the women in the United States as their audience, according to the report of *Time* (May 8, '44) based upon the survey made by Paul E. Lazarsfeld and Frank N. Stanton. Many of these women take the soap operas seriously and try to apply what they hear to their own lives, a fact which seems to indicate that they want definite answers to problems which they have been unable to solve for themselves.

Perhaps the matter should be put more bluntly: If the Church does not get about its business of dealing with people's deep needs, the dealers in entertainment, with their soothing simplifications and their staged laughter and tears, will offer pseudo-solutions. As long as churchmen sleep in "Zion," the dealers in entertainment will hold the field.

THIS year sixteen million horse players will go to the races and "will bet a cool billion that they can pick the top horses in 16,000 contests." reports *Fortune* for September. The magazine does not concern itself with reporting what gambling does to destroy the national integrity; it merely describes horse racing as a business. "War," says *Fortune*, "has brought horse racing the maddest money it has ever had, and has also made it an industry—big, increasingly honest, and a fat source for taxes."

Church leaders will deplore, of course, the attempts of Americans to get something for nothing. Perhaps the "cool billion" staked on horse races ought to be compared with amounts spent for overseas relief by the churches. But we ought to remember, before we moralize so smugly, that men gamble their petty dollars on unimportant issues because they have not been sufficiently challenged to gamble their lives on great causes.

ALMOST any church leader can get his article accepted in a secular magazine provided he "pans" the Church effectively enough. He has only to point out the sins of the Church (and they are many) to get a ready audience. Now healthy criticism of the Church is always in order, and churchmen are in a position to do the criticizing.

But we often wonder if much of the ink being spilled by churchmen criticizing the Church for secular audiences could not be used more effectively otherwise. The average reader knows what is wrong with the Church. A recounting of ecclesiastical failures only serves to confirm him in his opposition or indifference. In his desire to evade responsibility, he draws aid and comfort from the words of churchmen who tell him how fallen the Church is: "Well, I refuse to identify myself with such a back number as the Church."

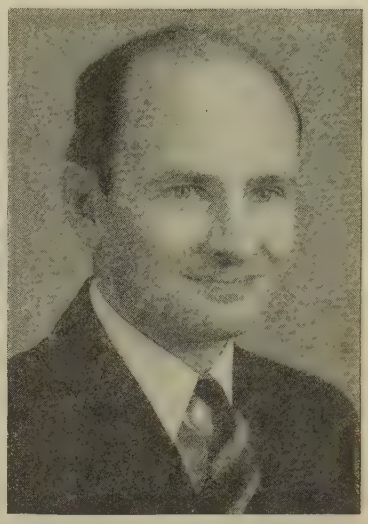
Brethren, it is time we quit telling the public what the Church is not, and begin telling what the Church is. Secular editors will quit being negative about this issue when churchmen begin presenting the positive, heroic side of present-day church life.

Let's tell what the Church is doing. In the telling we may perchance chase some comfortable readers of our secular magazines out of their self-constructed ivory towers from whence they have been accusing the Church of living in ivory towers!

THE July issue of *Coronet Magazine* contains an article paying tribute to American CO's, the men who won't shoulder arms, but who fight valiantly against malaria, typhus, and the plagues of war. The magazine describes something of the heroism of a group of men who have offered their bodies as guinea pigs in the laboratories of science for experiments in search of cures for dread diseases. The rewards for being a CO guinea pig, says *Coronet*, are small: "A large part of America considers these men yellow, slackers. Loss of jobs and social ostracism is more often than not their lot. The experiments are secret and the names of the men participating have never been released."

In the future when abuse is heaped upon these CO's, the least part of such abuse will come from the soldiers and sailors who have fought on the battle lines and seen death's shape in this war. The gallant will honor their kind.

2. Our Rule of Prayer



BY CLARENCE SEIDENSPINNER

In the second of his three articles on the minister's devotional life, Pastor Seidenspinner discusses a method and a resource which will tie pastors to the main mission of the ministry. He is pastor of First Methodist Church, Racine, Wis.

NO doubt a very important reason why some of us in the ministry find no joy in our private prayer and spiritual exercise is because we do not know the most fruitful methods of praying. We would like to pray but we don't know how. What praying we do seems to be on the margin of spiritual exercise.

Other reasons contribute to this devotional failure. Often we are unwilling to take the time to pray. To spend an hour several times a week or even once a day in fellowship with God seems a little steep. Next Sunday's sermon needs to be written, calls need to be made, and business administration bids for our attention. With the best intentions in the world, we take care of these items to the neglect of our spiritual exercise. Yet how can we make sermons and calls or direct the affairs of the parish like men of God if we have no fellowship with Him?

Often we do not select a suitable place for our private devotions. Sometimes we even have doubts about God. Sometimes we are unwilling to face the implacable will of God who calls us from our selfish and unbrotherly ways. If the truth must be told, sometimes our lives are so far from the purposes of God that we actually fear to meet Him in the cool of evening. These factors may contribute to our devotional failure, but more often we fail because we do not know a fruitful rule of prayer.

Here is a method of prayer and devotional exercise that has great possibilities for the enrichment of the spirit. Select a time and a place in which you will be free from distractions. Be willing to spend an hour in this unit of spiritual exercise, for it is hardly seemly to enter into fellowship with God while you have one eye on the clock. Seat yourself comfortably, for you are going to enter the realm of the spirit and you do not want to be body-conscious. The total situation must free your whole being for complete attention to spiritual stimuli.

Your first act is to place yourself in God's presence. Let the imagination help you to visualize the presence of Him in whom *we live and move and have our being.* Meditate for a moment upon the wonder of God, upon the way he sustains you even as the water buoys up the boat, upon the way his presence surrounds you, even as air envelopes your body and penetrates to its deepest interior. Then repeat some great word of adoration, such as the Sanctus.

It is a good practice also to read some devotional literature. This will deepen your sense of God's presence in human experience. Other men and women from our own day and from the long ago have known God and have recorded their companionship with Him. Such reading will prompt your mind and stir your feelings to a similar experience. The psalms of the Bible and the hymns of the church are a never failing treasure of such reading.

You will get variety in this second step of your rule by reading sometimes from the devotional classics or a good collection of religious poetry. A page from the *Imitation of Christ* or such a poem as Lew Sarett's "God Is at the Anvil" quickly orients the soul toward God.

Perhaps the best source of inspiration is the Gospels. It is our faith that God spoke his clearest words through Jesus Christ our Lord. If we are ever to understand God and his will for us, it will be through our careful study of the life and teachings of Jesus. Long ago Paul declared, *For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.* Therefore, when we want to have fellowship with God through devotional exercise it is important that we read, not the Bible in general, but the Gospels in particular.

For example, suppose you have turned to Mark 5:1-17 which tells about the man of the tombs who was healed by Jesus. You read the passage in its entirety and then try to visualize it.

You place yourself in the gospel situation, become a member of the group surrounding Jesus, and live through the whole experience as fully as possible. You see the poor demoniac run toward Jesus and hear him cry out in his anguish. You are aghast at the sight and do not see how this poor devil can ever be fixed up again. But look at the Master's face! How kind it is, and radiant with strength. You

[*Continued on page 41*]

homiletics

Preaching the Judgments of the Apocalypse

The Seer of Patmos as a preacher of judgment is the concern of this second discussion of "Preaching Values from the Book of Revelation" by Professor Laymon of Scarritt College, Nashville, Tenn. His final article will appear in the December issue under the title, "Preaching the Promises of the Apocalypse."

By Charles M. Laymon

IT is a serious matter to preach a message of judgment. Issues of life and death are at stake when we do so. It is as though one is announcing that "D Day" is upon the world. If it is ever proper to trifle with the truth, and who believes that it is, the preaching of judgment is not such a time.

One of the dangers in the preaching of judgment is that we may not be in a position to speak with the finality that such a message requires. Our knowledge is too often partial. We do not see as God sees, and yet we seek to speak with His authority. Understanding in such cases gives way to vehemence. Sensitive souls who come under the blast of such preaching are sometimes maimed for life and the wounds caused by the minister's jagged words refuse to heal.

Another danger that faces the preaching of judgment is that the preacher may be tempted to vindictiveness. It is never a sign of apostolicity for a minister to remark gloatingly after a tirade of judgment, "I certainly told them tonight." Sorrow and humility should be the true attitude in such moments. Only if we are chemically pure of smugness and pride, dare we announce the judgment of God. This was the lesson Jonah needed to learn when he proclaimed the doom of Nineveh. He was more concerned with his authority as a prophet of judgment than with the repentance of his congregation.

The Seer of Patmos is well known as a preacher of judgment. Many readers of the Book of Revelation are struck with the conviction that this is his leading message. Even though such a conclusion is open to question, it is true that numerous passages in his Apocalypse announce the Divine Assize. In any case the author was in a position to speak significantly in this capacity.

For one thing, the Seer was a victim of the evil world whose judgment he was pronouncing. He could speak of himself as "your brother and companion in tribulation." The Roman heel had pressed heavily upon his neck, for he had been exiled to Patmos "for the word of God." Concentration camps have never been comfortable whether in the first century or in the twentieth. As is frequently true, however, his visions came to him in the midst of his travail. He was not a theorist in these matters. Experience had been his teacher.

The Seer was in a position to speak for yet another reason. He was prophesying in the Spirit. Here is the way he put it: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet." This is the language of inspiration. It raises what he says to a level above individual desire. His words are not those of a man seeking personal revenge or attempting to even the score. There is a cosmic sweep and an all-embracing authority behind his statements. He is like Isaiah who opens his prophecy by calling upon all heaven and earth to give him a hearing, *for the Lord hath spoken.*

Finally, the Seer's position to utter the judgments of God was propitious because he was moved by the love of God at the same time that he was caught up by the judgment of God. This saves him from a morbid interest in destruction. I once heard a little boy gleefully cry out to a boxer who was pommeling his opponent, "Kill him! Kill him!" There is none of this in the author of the Apocalypse. As we pointed out in the preceding article, there are scenes in the judgments which require a strong stomach to witness, but they are marked by realism, a tragic sense of the appalling consequences for a world that looks into the face of Jesus and denies what it sees there, rather than an unbridled desire to destroy.

The Program of Judgment

The judgments of the Apocalypse are arranged in a three-fold series which may be called the Opening of the Seven Seals (6:1-17; 8:1-5), the Blowing of

the Seven Trumpets (8:6-9, 21; 11: 15-19), and the Emptying of the Seven Bowls (15:1-16, 21). As can be seen from these titles, each series is made up of seven separate judgments. They do not unfold in unbroken succession but are interrupted by interludes in which certain secondary truths are treated. After each seal is opened, each trumpet sounded, and each bowl emptied, a judgment comes upon the earth.

This schematic arrangement is quite conventional in the sense that it follows a form familiar in many apocalyptic writings. The numbers 3 and 7 were both regarded as sacred and suggested completeness and finality, so that by presenting his message in this form the Seer is asserting that God's judgment is complete.

In writings of this kind we do not look for an architectural blueprint, a time schedule, and an order of events. Rather we are given a dramatic and graphic representation of the ultimate issues of history as mankind is judged in the presence of God. *It is the fact of judgment, the inevitability of judgment, and the finality of judgment, rather than the details of judgment which stand forth.*

Jesus Is Caesar!

Judgment does not grow out of a passing dislike or a sudden whim of displeasure for this or that. It dare not be the result of "feeling out of sorts." If it is to be worthy it must be rooted and grounded in a fixed principle. That is, it must be none other than the judgment of a righteous God. This is exactly what we find in the Apocalypse of John.

The basic conviction behind the portrayal of the Seer is that the universe is God's and that anyone or anything that is set up against his Christ will be destroyed. Jesus represents the way the universe is put together, and meeting him cannot be avoided by men or nations. To express it in terms of rule, the Romans were insisting that Domitian was Caesar and that therefore he deserved ultimate allegiance. The Revelation declared that this was untrue. Jesus alone was Caesar!

Judgments Through Nature

The judgments that are pictured in the Apocalypse come upon the earth largely through nature. Famine, earthquakes, falling stars, hail, fire, darkness, locust plagues, sores, bloody seas and rivers, scorching suns, and mighty hail stones—these mark the path of judgment. All these, however, are preliminary to the final appearing before God, at which time the Book of Life is opened containing a record of deeds done on earth (19:12).

There is an interesting and vital message here for our own day. We incline toward treating nature as an independent system, self-contained within its own sphere. Not so with the Seer of Patmos. Nature was for him an expression of God's will and God could use its forces to judge men, as well as to bless them. The God who saved men gloriously was the same God who controlled nature to do his bidding.

The conception of natural law was not popularized in the first century, of course. Our author could, therefore, picture a third part of the stars as smitten (8:12) and still think of the solar system as remaining intact, where we cannot as we understand it. It is our conviction, however, that if he were living today the *form* of the vision would be in line with our outlook, *but the message of God's inevitable judgment would be no less vigorous.*

The Judgments Today

In preaching the judgments of the Apocalypse today, we would do well to stress the fact of God's judgment of evil as well as its inevitability. There is no escaping! When it comes, however, to using this great book as a detailed forecast or almanac of coming events, we must remember several things.

Foremost of all we must consider that our author was writing for his own generation as it faced the pagan Roman world, and that he pictured the end of the world and the Final Judgment *as coming in his own day* (1:1; 22:6, 10, 12, 20).

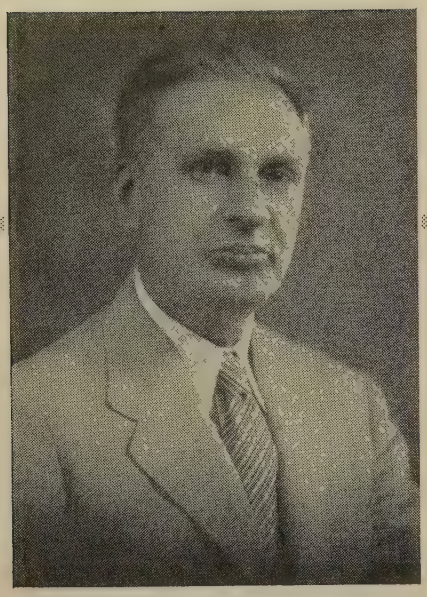
Then we must also understand that an apocalyptic writing is moral conviction expressed in verbal pageantry rather than a strict blueprint of future action. Scenes follow scenes, *not in logical and historical sequence, but in dramatic succession.*

Faulty Interpretations

When an interpreter attempts to relate the Apocalypse of John to modern living, looking for the "signs of the times," he has little to guide him except his own ingenuity. That is why few such interpreters agree among themselves. Usually they do not let the Seer speak for himself, but bring in selected verses from Daniel, Joel, Zechariah, and Paul to complete their picture. Much confusion results. Passages in these books are torn from their context and historical background to be fitted into a scheme *of the interpreter's own construction* which he regards as of God's making.

Typical attempts to find in the present scene a fulfillment of apocalyptic prophecy are these: Daniel 12:4 says that "many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased." The automobile, aeroplane, railroad, and the mass of printed matter from the modern press are taken to be fulfillments of Daniel's words. How general and loose is this application! II Timothy 3:1 mentions "perilous times." These words are applied to the present crisis, as they were applied to World War I and to multiplied other crises down through the centuries. Again the indefiniteness is against the interpretation. II Thessalonians 2:3 refers to a falling away just before the end. Modern disinterest in religion is said to fulfill this word, as though a period of disbelief (provided you think this to be true of our day) were original with us and had never happened before.

Surely the above type of Bible study is bound to mislead. Let us read the Apocalypse of John, and all other apocalyptic writing, as their first readers read and understood them. Then we can take their great moral convictions concerning the fact and inevitability of judgment and apply them to our own age with conviction. Here is the Word of God for our time—yes, and for all time. This is what the Seer would do if he were here today.



Jesus Christ, the

Using Hebrews 1:1 as his text, Pastor Johnson affirms that it is Jesus Christ who has made the love of God credible to men. He is minister of First Methodist Church, Chicago, Ill.

THE personality of Jesus Christ is the vital center of Christianity. Christian groups have differed in their interpretation of the Bible, but all Christians have united in a common confession of faith in Jesus as their Lord and Master.

The scholars of the Church have tried in all ages to arrive at an intellectually satisfying interpretation of His person, but have never ceased to believe that in Him the supreme word about God and life and destiny has been spoken. Where theologies have been halting and hesitant, the heart has always found the language of worship and adoration appropriate when applied to Him who has been for millions the Way and the Truth and the Life. The highest titles which the vocabulary of man can frame have been given to Christ; and the titles have not been honorific merely, but descriptive of the spiritual relationships which binds the hearts of men to Him.

Among the Hebrews, he was called the Messiah, the One through whom God's gracious purpose of redemption was to be carried out and the prophetic hopes of the centuries fulfilled. The educated Greek Christian called Him the Logos, the Word of God, the Incarnate Reason, because in Jesus Christ God had manifested himself in the flesh, and revealed his love and grace within the limitations of human personality. Plato said that beauty is the visibleness of truth, and the Gentile Christian said that in Jesus the truth about God had been expressed in the beautiful language of human life.

I

The personality of Christ is central in our thinking about God.

The little boy who stood patiently before the photograph of his missionary father framed upon the wall, and said to his mother, anxiously awaiting the return of the loved one, "I wish father would come out of the frame," spoke more wisely than he knew of the desire that has revealed itself in perverted forms in the idolatries of the nations, and has sometimes been expressed in the crude theologies of the world's primitive peoples. It is a desire which has stirred men's hearts from the beginning of time, and was most adequately answered when God in Christ altered human life—stepped out of the frame, as it were, of the physical universe—and bodied himself forth in human flesh.

It has never been easy to believe in the friendliness of God; it is not easy today. There are so many hard and tragic things in life not easily squared with the creeds of the Church. Christians hold on to their faith in a Christ-like God, in spite of appearances to the contrary, without pretending to solve every mystery that shadows man's pathway through the years.

Apart from Jesus Christ it has been difficult for men to keep the fact of the personal love of God clear and vivid. To believe that the Power that holds the world in its control is a kindly Power; that the Wisdom that has evolved the marvels of the mysterious universe is a Wisdom touched with pity for human frailty; that the mighty Will back of the energies that move the heavens and earth is a Will inspired by a love that suffers when men go wrong, and patiently seeks to redeem them from their sins, requires more than the validation of the philosopher's reason. It is a conviction that has come most convincingly and most certainly only to those who have accepted the teachings of Christ and have felt the power of His spirit. It is Jesus Christ who has made the love of God credible.

In him God has spoken to bewildered men the one word that most needed to be said. Through Him we come to know God as real, and to be sure of His grace. Through philosophy men may reach the conclusion that the universe is founded in reason; through conscience men may conclude that the world is a moral order, that there is a Power not ourselves making for righteousness; through science man may conclude that the universe is pervaded by law and order; but it is only through Christ that men have been able to come to the Father, to enter into an experience of His friendliness.

II

The personality of Christ is central likewise in interpreting the experience of the Church.

Paul the theologian had a mind that ranged through many subtleties of the intellect and penetrated the profoundest secrets of time and eternity but Paul the man had a very simple faith. The living substance of it was easily stated and he was always eager to commend it to others. Before the Sanhedrin, before Roman governors in conference with the leaders of the churches, and before the sceptical phi-

Heart of Our Faith

A Sermon By IVER M. JOHNSON

losophers of Athens he continually affirmed the simple things that constituted the creed upon which his life had been built: that he had seen Christ in the spirit; that his life had been changed in every fiber and that he was converted by the contact of Christ with his own soul. The love of Christ had flowed into his life and transfigured it so that he measured his duty by Christ's standards and interpreted his sufferings in the light of Christ's cross, and found the inspiration for his own eager desire to save men in the everlasting love of God revealed in Jesus Christ.

This fact of Christ's spiritual presence has been the abiding spiritual continuum of the church's history. Despite the accidents of temperament and the differences of mental background, the Christ of experience has been the center of the Church's loyalty and the secret of its spiritual power. It has risen in influence when Christ has been magnified, and dwindled in spiritual effectiveness when Christ has been ignored or misrepresented. Men and societies have grown to be like Him when they have seen Him as He is.

George Matheson saw that Christ is the eternal contemporary of man and adequate to the solution of the problems of every new generation. He put the glory of it into words that sound like a rhapsody: "Son of man, whenever I doubt of life, I think of Thee. Nothing is so impossible, as that thou shouldest be dead, I can imagine the hills to dissolve into vapor, and the stars to melt in smoke, and the rivers to empty themselves in sheer exhaustion, but I feel no limit in Thee. Thou never growest old to me. Last century is old, last year is an obsolete fashion, but Thou art not obsolete. Thou art abreast of all the centuries, I have never come up with Thee, modern as I am."

Every fresh discovery of Jesus Christ has meant an access of moral power, an enlargement of spiritual vision, and a new and vital sense of God. In this tragic year, looking out upon a generation distraught and torn with strife, we Christians may once again serve our time by giving to the world a living demonstration of His spirit incarnate in life.

III

The personality of Jesus Christ is central in our hopes for the world.

In Ibsen's great drama, *The Emperor and the Galilean*, Julian the Apostate is represented as having a dream in which he fancies himself carried to another planet from which he could look down on our earth where he had destroyed the Christian faith, and uprooted the memory of Jesus of Nazareth.

"But behold, my Maximus,—there came a procession by me, on the strange earth where I stood. There were soldiers, and judges, and executioners at the head of it, and weeping women followed. And lo!—in the midst of the slow-moving array, was the Galilean, alive, and bearing a cross on his back. Then I called to him, and said, 'Whither away, Galilean?' But he turned his face toward me, smiled, nodded slowly, and said: 'To the place of the skull.'"

Christ is not so easily rid of as His enemies have imagined. When men think themselves rid of Him, He reappears in strange places and confronts them at times when they least expect Him. That is just what one would have the right to expect from the Christ of the New Testament. For the Christ whom Christians worship must be seen in the perspective of eternity. As one of His early interpreters put it, He is the Alpha and Omega; not a chance item in the world's affairs, but the revelation of the Eternal Purpose of God working itself out in history.

It is beginning to dawn upon thoughtful students that the world cannot be saved on any other terms than Christ's. He stands today as in the olden time, pointing men to the friendly road of co-operation and brotherhood and justice. His teachings are seen to be, not the mouthings of a deluded fanatic, nor the impossible dreams of a visionary, but the message of a Teacher sent from God, who has spoken the words of eternal life. The alternative would seem to be clear; humanity must take Jesus seriously or perish.

Christ is a necessity, not a luxury. That would seem to be a truth that has emerged out of all the blundering experiments of human history. Old phrases may have lost their magic, old forms of thought become obsolete. But Christ is still the inspiration of the noblest servants of humanity; and He alone has the message that can save the world. Peace and strength are to be found in Him now as in the ancient time when the weary and the heavy-laden and the sinful found in Him their succor and their hope. His life reminds one of that sea of glass mingled with fire that John saw on Patmos, pure and transparent as crystal and yet capable of flaming enthusiasms that are like a bolt of fire in the blood.

In times of moral corruption when men are tempted to accommodate themselves to the standards of a degraded society, His strong, brave figure puts courage into the heart and rallies the wavering conscience. In times of disillusionment, when the light of faith burns low and men's hopes of a better world grow dim, His revelation of a love that endures at the heart of the world renews men's confidence like a pledge of victory. In ages of cynicism, when men are tempted to think meanly of themselves and their fellows. He infects them with his own undiscourageable faith in the possibilities of human nature. And in hours when life seems hard and tragic, His merciful figure upon the cross, commiting his soul into the hands of the Everlasting Father in the hour when the heavens were black and God seemed to be in eclipse, strengthens men's faith in the goodness of life and helps them to believe that behind all the storms that beat across the landscape is a love that is wiser than all human wisdom, and more just than man's measuring rods of right, and more tender than all earthly compassion.

Life's Danger Zones

The Kingdom is not of the soft and flabby, declares Preacher Hutchinson, who warns individuals, church, and state against the perils of "Easy Street" on the eve of another national Thanksgiving Day. He has been an ordained minister for 44 years, having served charges in Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Washington, D. C. He is now a retired member of the East Oklahoma Conference.

By
FORNEY
HUTCHINSON

IN the spring of 1935 I had occasion to visit, on church business, in White Sulphur Springs, W. Va. I spent the evening in a delightful home, the head of which was in charge of the government fish hatcheries near by. For breakfast we had a big dish of delicious salt mackerel. A little later I went out to take a look at the hatcheries. The fish were separated in pens, graded, I believe according to age. For my entertainment my host fed the fish while I was there. He threw in great handfuls of ground meat which they greedily devoured.

Remembering my breakfast, I said, "Don't you ever eat these fish?"

He replied, "No, they're not fit to eat. Kept here in these pens, their flesh is soft and tasteless. A little later, we'll put the larger ones into mountain streams where, as a result of their struggles, their flesh will grow firm and sweet and juicy. Then they will make a dish fit for a king."

I recalled at once the story of a canny Scotsman who was a fisherman along the Labrador coast. He seemed to have a secret which he was able to keep from his fellow-fishermen. For some reason, he always had a better market for his catch than did any of his associates. One day he suddenly died, and when the other fishermen went into his boat they discovered his secret. In the fish pen in the bottom of his boat there were some horny-headed catfish. They kept the other fish stirred up, on the alert, fighting for their lives, and as a result their flesh was always firm and fit for use.

Combining these two experiences, I discovered what I like to call "The Philosophy of the Fish Pens." With that philosophy in the background, I wish to speak of the danger zones of life for institutions and individuals.

Contrary to the general opinion, the most dangerous location in the world for an institution or an individual, is *easy street.* This is true of nations. Rome was the mistress of the world until she became rich and prosperous and settled down to a steady process of decay. She became soft and flabby and the hardier Goths and Huns from the North overran her provinces, destroyed her cities, and overthrew her empire. When the Manchus conquered China, the Chinese located their conquerors on easy street. They supplied their every want. Lolling in luxury, the conquerors became incapable of ruling their subjects and were soon cast out.

This story repeats itself from generation to generation. Its approach is apparent today in our own country. There was a time when ours was a pioneering people. Our founding fathers of necessity underwent many hardships—they were strong and virile. Fourth of July orators rehearse with pride and eloquence the hardships and difficulties of early life in America. We love to think of our Pilgrim Fathers, of Valley Forge, and of the conquest of the Great West.

The Church also faces the same peril. She, too, seeks to locate on easy street, forgetting that wealth and luxury quickly do their work. The periods of the greatest heroism in the life of the Church were at the same time periods of the severest persecution. The Church of our day, strange to say, looks to Germany, for inspiration. Martin Niemoller and his associates are suffering for conscience' sake, and are rotting in prison because they refuse to sacrifice their convictions. Times of ease and comfort are always perilous for the Christian Church. No wonder the prophet pronounces woe upon those who are at "ease in Zion." Today the soul of the Church is in jeopardy. She has grown loose and tolerant with reference to her cherished doctrines. Her standards have been lowered. A "Topless Heaven" and a "Bottomless Hell" have been discarded. We talk about "what the people want," not about what the Scriptures teach. Nothing is fundamental any more. Religion is too *cheap.* It is a system of health and comfort. It makes no demands. Yes, the church is located on easy street, in close proximity to the lap of luxury.

The most dangerous location for the modern home is easy street. Notwithstanding its perils, it is the most popular residential section of any city. Everybody looks forward to the time when they can get a lot and move on to easy street, never seeming to realize how dangerous it is. It jeopardizes the best interests of the entire family, especially the children and the old folk. It's a mistaken kindness to move old people away from the home where they have lived and labored, and put them down in the midst of every comfort, with nothing to do but "take it easy." When they quit, they die, and an order had as well be turned in for an undertaker to call. Of course, this does not apply to the sick and helpless.

It is a dangerous place for our *women.* A preacher friend of mine sometimes says that what the modern woman calls work, his mother called "getting ready to go to work." The problem of the mistress of a mansion on easy street is one largely of "resting and reducing." The trouble is, the two don't go well together. If you rest, you can't reduce, and if you reduce, you can't rest. Incidentally, the war has done much to remedy these conditions.

Easy street is especially perilous for our children. I sympathize with Child Labor laws. The period set apart for their education and growth should not be interfered with by grinding toil. And yet I am quite sure that there are more children wrecked today because of nothing to do than because of doing too much. Rotary and other clubs do a beautiful service in providing a two-weeks vacation for what they call "underprivileged children." The only trouble is, they mean by "underprivileged children" the children who have to work. As a matter of fact, "underprivileged children" are those who are born to ease and luxury, never having known what an honest day's work is.

There is much infant mortality today due to "choking to death on silver spoons." Unselfish parents who had to work in their youth, and would not have

been worth killing otherwise, are always planning to move up on easy street so their children will not have to work as they did. So they go on working themselves bald and into early graves to guarantee the utter worthlessness of their children. Like Aaron and his idol, they pour in gold and a calf comes out. Mothers refuse to wean their children, and so after they are half grown, they are still nursing. We call it mother love—it is actually feminine weakness.

The story is told of an old deer hound who had spent his life chasing deer through the highlands of Scotland. Now and then he would pull one down and win the commendation of his master. He had a lot of pups and in the kindness of his heart he decided to make life easier for them than it had been for him. So he ran down a herd of deer and put them in a corral. When his pups wanted venison, all they had to do was to go out in the corral and pull down a deer. By and by, after a useful life the old hound passed away, and every pup he had died with the "mange."

But easy street is the most perilous of all for the individual. It is fatal to physical life. Strength gives way to weakness. No coach would allow a member of his football team to live on that street. Samson in his youth stored up strength for his maturity. He enjoyed the fruits of his youthful labors when he ate honey from the dried carcass of a lion he had killed in his earlier life.

It is perilous, furthermore, to economic life. A lot of sympathy is being wasted nowadays on our youth. We talk about it being hard to get started in life. It was always been hard. Perhaps the depression and the war are not wholly without value. Some, at least, have been saved because they were thrown out of the "lap of luxury." They have been compelled to fight for themselves.

In the intellectual realm the same truth obtains. The average student spends much time in these days of elective courses hunting easy marks, forgetting that he is thereby defeating the purpose of education. Problems have a place in the development of the mind, even if you cannot solve them. A course in the "University of Hard Knocks" has a distinct value. Self-made men are all right, unless they become conceited and worship their makers. Even preachers sometimes move from place to place, seeking to escape difficulties. They succeed only in running into harder ones.

[*Continued on page 38*]

from the practical parish

Sunday Night

By S. B. Wilford

First Methodist Church, Blytheville, Ark., now has a revitalized Sunday evening service. At the suggestion of his district superintendent, Pastor Wilford tells for The Pastor *how it happened:*

I am just one of the thousands of Methodist preachers who have threatened to conduct the funeral of the Sunday night service and admit the patient's demise. I was as reluctant to give up and quit on Sunday night, however, as any other of those thousands of Methodist preachers.

Here is what I resolved to try. In the first place I nailed the lid on the old barrel and tried to prepare just as good a sermon for Sunday night as I did for Sunday morning. Second, we tried to have some good music in addition to the congregational singing. We used a choir from various departments of the church school, and in this way interested a group of parents. In addition to this, each Friday for a month we mailed a letter to the first hundred families in the addressograph files. We asked the members of each family to serve as part of a large committee to sponsor the Sunday night service for a month. We asked that they do three specific things: 1) to be present themselves; 2) to bring at least one person not in the habit of attending; 3) to invite four persons to the service.

I explained in the first letter to each group that as a friend and pastor I would be willing to respond to three such simple requests from any one of them. After the first letter, the letter for each week gave something of a report of the progress being made and always repeated the three requests, specifying that the same four persons be invited; there is value in the impact. We carried this plan through the membership of the church during last winter, taking the next hundred families from the files each month. Last summer our services were held on the church lawn.

The increase in attendance the Sunday night after the first letter went out was noticeable—at least four times the number we had averaged the past six months. The attendance remained uniformly good—never less than three times the average prior attendance and often as much as six times as large. Participation was by no means perfect, but we saw in our services many people whom we had not seen in church before. A considerable number who had not been attending continued to come after their month of sponsorship had passed.

In our church we give September to stewardship promotion. We resumed our sponsored services in October.

We are planning this year to write letters to fifty non-church members each month, in addition to the letters to the one hundred families who are asked to sponsor the meetings. We expect to have a men's chorus for a month, the Sunday morning choir for a month, the senior-young people's choir for a month, and the intermediate and junior departments for a month each.

The pastor will attempt to call on each sponsoring family during the month they are sponsoring.

An added feature this year will be the registration of each person attending by the use of an attendance card.

The Church Chest

By Kenneth Clay

At First Methodist Church, Maysville, Ky., members have started a financial plan that has cut out special offerings. The Pastor *asked the minister of the church to tell readers about the plan. Pastor Clay gave the following story:*

The increasing number of extra offerings asked by The Methodist Church had become embarrassing both to the pastor and to the people. The first complaint that came to me about these offerings came from one of the laymen a little more than a year ago. "Mr. Clay," he said to me, "every Sunday morning when you start with one of your appeals, I know you are building up for an offering."

The Methodist Church at Corryton, Tenn., will be erected as a memorial to Charles C. Rutherford, prominent layman of Knoxville. The belfry over the doorway is particularly significant in view of the fact that the church will be a memorial. (Barber & McMurry, Architects.)

Other members insisted that it was embarrassing to them for an appeal to be made for money when visitors were present. Others complained that the burden rested upon the "faithful few" and that the bulk of the members never gave a penny on the extras.

The official board, having decided that every worthy cause must be supported, but by a better method than special offerings, asked me to work out some plan and present it to the board. I conceived the idea that a Church Chest, patterned after the community chest, might solve our problem The idea was to issue shares worth five dollars each. Enough shares were to be sold to cover all solicitations from the General Board and from the Kentucky Conference.

The Official Board immediately adopted this plan and pledged their support. I promised then that, when they came to church on Sunday, the regular offering would be the *only* offering. The first Sunday in January we began the sale of these shares, and the sales continued throughout the entire month. Only one person out of a membership of three hundred refused to support the Church Chest, and even he admitted that it was a good plan.

The Chest becomes more and more popular with the members as they see it in operation. On the Sunday when special offerings would have been asked for, I make an announcement about the cause. When the Golden Cross was presented a few Sundays ago, I made the following announcement: "This Sunday is Golden Cross Sunday. We have been asked for an offering for our two hospitals here in Kentucky, the Good Samaritan Hospital at Lexington, and the Methodist Hospital of Kentucky at Pikeville. The Church Chest which you made possible last January has sent ——— dollars this week to the Golden Cross. Every person who supported the Chest had a part in this offering." I also print these announcements in the church bulletin.

Since the organization of the Church Chest, we have been able to give more to the causes to which we were already giving and also to give to some which were not supported before. Then, too, since every member is solicited, the giving is proportionate and the burden of the "faithful few" has been eased. Another advantage is that those who refused to support certain causes but supported others liberally are now giving to every cause. But perhaps the most important thing which the Church Chest has made possible has been the elevation of the worship service to its rightful position.

Christmas Plays

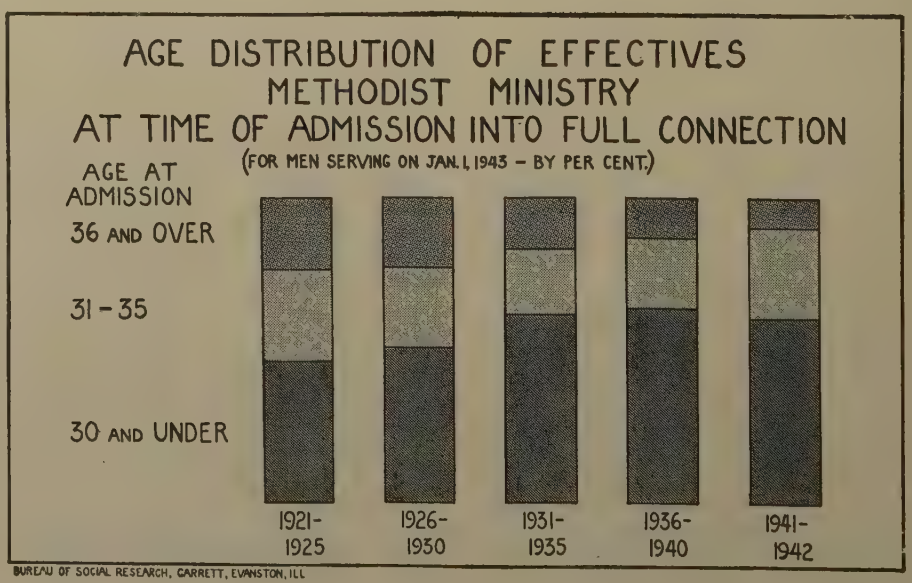
By Harold A. Ehrensperger

Each year as the Christmas season approaches, pastors by the thousands turn their thoughts to methods of dramatizing again for parishioners the meanings of the Nativity. This year The Pastor *has asked Harold A. Ehrensperger, recognized authority on religious drama, to select a list of plays for the Christmas season. He is the author of numerous pageants, articles and pamphlets on drama, and is the editor of* Plays to Live By, Plays for These Times, *and* Plays for the Changing World. *His "Dramatic Calendar for Churches" is the most completely annotated listing of plays for churches ever compiled. Now editorial secretary of the Student Department, Methodist Board of Education, Mr. Ehrensperger is editor of* motive, *magazine of the Methodist Student Movement. He is now church and drama chairman of the Theatre for Victory Council.*

His recommended list of plays for Christmas:

No Room at the Inn, by Esther E. Olson. One act. 2 men, 2 women. 30 minutes. Little Malthar makes her first lamp. The inn is overflowing, and there is still a family looking for shelter. Little Malthar suggests an old barn, and offers her ugly lamp if they wish it. Her father takes the lamp to the barn and it seems to illuminate the whole town with the brightness radiating from the manger. Baker, 35 cents.

The Blessed Vagrants, by Raymond F. Bosworth. One act. 4 men, 1 woman. 30 minutes. A police precinct station on Christmas Eve. A fanciful realistic play with a warm human appeal showing the breakdown of hardness and cruelty.



Good for any time of the year. In *Plays to Live By*, Abingdon-Cokesbury, 25 cents.

No Gift in Return, by Jean Cameron Agnew. One act. 2 women, 1 boy. A Christmas play of our day with point at any time of the year. In *Plays for These Times*, Abingdon-Cokesbury, 35 cents.

Peace I Give Unto You, by Dorothy Clarke Wilson. One Act. 4 men, 1 woman. 30 minutes. Christmas peace plot. Into the humble cottage of Joseph and Martha comes a sequence of happenings that encompass the whole depth of human emotions. A variation of the Christmas theme. Baker, 35 cents.

The Saint, by A. Beatrice Knowles. One act. 1 man, 19 boys, 14 girls. A drama of the original St. Nicholas and Christmas giving. Good for younger high-school age to produce. Royalty $5. French, 35 cents.

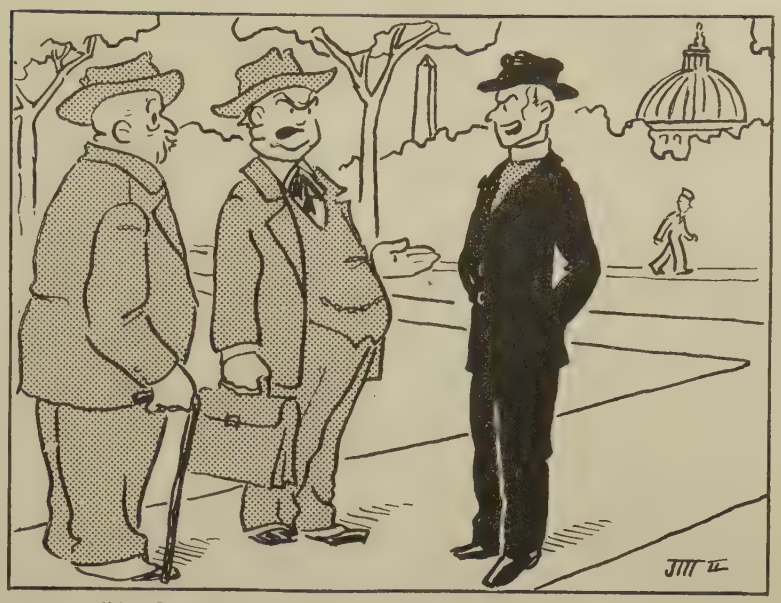
Why the Chimes Rang, by Elizabeth McFadden. One scene. 12 persons and choir. 4 speaking parts. Mixed group. 30 minutes. Can be given a simple production or a very elaborate one. After the great lady and courtier, scholar and king, have offered their gifts in vain, it is the boy's gift of pennies, offered by a loving heart, which causes the miraculous ringing of the Christmas chimes. Royalty $5. French, 35 cents.

The Nativity; A Christmas Service, arranged by Rosamond Kimball. 11 men and boys, 1 girl, any number of little children. Choir. 30 minutes to 1 hour. The nativity story told by biblical selections arranged in dramatic form and accompanied by carols. Easy. French, 35 cents.

No Room in the Hotel, by Dorothy Clarke Wilson. One act. 5 men, 5 women. A new Christmas play, adapting the essence of the biblical story to a modern situation in an American small town. (License for first performance free with the purchase of ten copies; subsequent performances, $2.50 each.) Baker, 35 cents.

The Pageant of the Singing Stars, by Louis Wilson. A Christmas pageant presenting poetically an appeal for a more Christlike social order. No scenery. (Royalty $5.) Baker, 35 cents.

The Saint's Return, by Esther Willard Bates. A fantasy in one act. 6 man, 4 women. A group of saints in convocation in the Half-Way House to Heaven despair of improving this warring world. The arrival of an old man and his daughter, victims of the war but still lovers of humanity, puts new heart in the saints. (Royalty, $5 when admission is charged: otherwise free.) Baker, 35 cents.



"A clergyman has no business in Washington. Why aren't you out looking after your flock?"
"I am. I'm after the wolf."—From *Social Action*.

For Better Counseling, Clinical Work

Two years ago the New Jersey Conference, acting upon the wishes of the pastors themselves, set up a committee on pastoral counseling.

The committee (A. L. Gongloff, chairman) arranges, in various centers of the conference, all-day seminars which are attended by outstanding men in the fields of psychiatry, psychology, and pastoral counseling. These meetings afford pastors opportunity for questions and case study. Bibliographies for further reference are provided.

The committee has suggested to the pastors that each of them attempt to set up in his town a community counseling committee, composed of two ministers (one Catholic and one Protestant), two medical men, and two educators.

This winter, in addition to the seminar meetings, the committee plans a trip to the state hospital. The ministers there will have the opportunity to study, with the superintendent of the hospital, the chaplain, and the hospital psychiatrist, some of the problems involved in ministering to the mentally ill. Purpose of the study is to help pastors learn better methods for counseling in a *preventive* way.

The committee expects to visit also one of the regular hospitals for the physically ill. In these trips the pastors will learn, from those especially equipped to minister to each type of illness, something of the problems involved in counseling the sick.

Servicemen: Task for Young People

Months ago, when servicemen began crowding Canal Street Methodist Church, New Orleans, officials worked diligently obtaining Sunday dinner invitations for the visitors in church homes. From the standpoint of integrating servicemen into the church life, the results of these efforts were negligible.

Then Canal Street Church (James T. Harris, pastor) made a discovery: Servicemen would respond to the church's efforts provided they were made an integral part of the church program through the young people's department. The church placed the main responsibility for integrating servicemen into the program upon the young people's department.

Under the new program, emphasis was placed upon the Sunday evening meetings of the young people. These meetings featured "fellowship supper" and recreation. Crowning part of the program was the young people's worship service.

Older members were delighted to find that servicemen became loyal participants in the evening church service.

When given a job that tested their powers, the young people made improvements in each department of their work. One example: The thirty active members gave $100 last year to missions alone through the Methodist Youth Fund.

CONCERNING GOOD LITERATURE AND WHAT IT CAN DO

GEORGE M. HORNE • *Crosby, Texas*

Thinking is the mental process of comparing, weighing, and synthesizing such facts as are in our possession. But all too often our facts are insufficient. If most of our information is drawn from newspapers, popular magazines, and town gossip, most of our thinking will necessarily consist in weighing, comparing, and synthesizing this kind of information, and it is all but impossible that our conclusions will be other than the pagan conclusions of popular culture.

Modifying facts of the right kind which can be brought to the attention of all the people by the minister directly are so minute in quantity, when compared with the flood-stage of propaganda filling the atmosphere, that a man must be no less than mad who cannot understand that the minister needs help in this task. It is the legitimate purpose of our church literature to meet this pastoral need.

What are the evidences that church literature helps? Let me confine my evidence to the facts in my own ministry, and, for lack of space, to two items, Golden Cross and orphanage.

After a literature campaign at Buckholts, Texas, Golden Cross offerings increased from $6 to $8; orphanage, from $5 to $18. At Bedias, Texas, after a similar campaign, Golden Cross offerings increased from $3 to $43; orphanage, from $33 to $77.50.

At Crosby Station, before the literature campaign, there had been no contribution at all to the Golden Cross. After the campaign the contribution was $63, and the orphanage giving increased $25.

The literature campaigns also helped to increase World Service giving. In 1942, Bedias paid only 42.2 per cent of its World Service quota. In 1943, it paid $9 over its quota. At Crosby Station, World Service payment increased from 61.7 per cent in 1943 to 100 per cent in 1944.

These are accurate statistical results. The area with which I am primarily concerned, however, cannot be so tabulated because it has to do with spiritual values.

I have no doubt that the spiritual results are commensurate with, or in excess of, the tabulated results in terms of finance, though I cannot lay it down in so many actual figures. We have already received over twice as many on profession of faith this year at Crosby as were received in the combined period of 1942 and 1943.

In evaluating the above figures, however, it is well to bear in mind that I had just begun to experiment with the church literature in Buckholts and stayed there only seven months. When I went to Bedias, I found only three subscribers to the *Christian Advocate;* When I left there were eighty-eight subscribers. When I came to Crosby, I found two subscribers; there are now ninety-three. Other literature is not neglected.

I am convinced that any problem the church faces could be solved within a short time if the church would see that the people get the facts.

PASSING IT ON

NORMAN PAUL BABCOCK • *Aspen, Colo.*

The following quotation from *The Philosophy of the Christian Religion* so "checked me up in my reins" that I felt not impelled but compelled to pass it on to others. In speaking of the difference in the ends of the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of Man, Andrew Martin Fairbairn says: "The 'lord' (of this world) has only so to marshal his forces as to work his will, but the 'minister' (of Christ) has to seek the person he would save, bear him in his own soul, quicken the dead energies of good within him by the streams of his own life, burn out the evil of the old manhood by the fire of consuming love."

CAN PROTESTANTISM REPEAT?

EDWARD LAIRD MILLS • *Alameda, Calif.*

The history of American Christianity packs a punch. Its epic qualities are evident to all. It met the frontier unrolling across three thousand miles and conquered it.

Now the territorial frontier has largely disappeared. In its place have come large cities, steadily multiplying in number and growing in size, also rural sections, frequently decadent.

Can a frontier-conditioned Protestantism cope with these new problems? So far it has not done so. The challenge of polyglot groups has been met only in part; the churches in the cities are kept going by immigrants from smaller towns and from villages, and the ministry provided rural areas is becoming more and more insufficient.

It is not a matter of polity or doctrine. Baptist, Disciple, Methodist, Presbyterian—all played a big part in frontier conquest; all are failing to solve the problems of today.

Can something be done about the Protestant—Legion is his name—who lives in a residential neighborhood, sends his children to the community Sunday school, and goes once in a while to the big church downtown where he thinks he finds better preaching, finer music and fewer responsibilities? He supports neither church adequately and as a soldier of the Lord he cuts a poor figure.

Has not too much reliance been placed on a professional ministry? Can these multitudinous "lost" churchmen be reclaimed without the down-to-earth efforts of laymen—and women—who are their friends and neighbors? Mark Guy Pearse once observed that "you can never hire enough people to convert the world." Maybe the present shortage of ministers is a blessing in disguise.

Shall we have a survey? No, indeed. Our library shelves are cluttered up now with repeated city surveys and diagnoses made during the past twenty years. Has anyone thought of using them to improve conditions?

A testimony meeting of city and county pastors would seem in order.

And we Methodists need to think over our system of appointment making. It is good for the average church and the average man. It is not so good for the exceptional church and the exceptional man. It polishes off the rough corners till both men and churches lose their distinctive character.

Whenever bishops and district superintendents are willing to travel the hard way, results can be obtained. There

was a time when one of the chief qualifications of a preacher for a college town pastorate was to have children of college age! When the bishops became aware that a different policy was needed, they began to appoint specially prepared men for these specially difficult tasks. That process can be carried much further. There are a half-dozen types of city charges, and two or three in the country. To give each a tailor-made job would be difficult, but in the long run worth while.

CRUSADE FOR CHRIST: THE CHURCH AT WORK

W. RALPH WARD, JR. • *Manchester, Conn.*

In one of the area councils where the Crusade for Christ was being interpreted and plans laid to get it under way in every local church, Dr. Ralph Diffendorfer of the Board of Foreign Missions who was serving as resource leader laid emphasis in his opening remarks upon the fact that the Crusade for Christ must approach the church not as a "field to be worked but as a force to work."

Surely that is a distinction. The former approach would see the Crusade primarily as a high pressure campaign to increase World Service funds, and would give little attention to the means as long as the end was reached.

In such a Crusade the worst evils of commercialism, of pietism with its hand out, of sob-stories with the collection in mind would be the result. When it was all over the church would have been worked, the few faithful souls worn out and more irritable than ever, the results disappointing, and the reaction toward the future world service program of our church most unfavorable.

The Church *at work* in the Crusade for Christ gives quite a different picture. In this approach not one goal but five would be reached. No method would be suggested or used which would not in itself be an end in which the individual would experience the joy of Christian fellowship and service. It would get immediate results, but what is equally important it would stimulate a continuous growth in Christian thinking and living. And instead of an unfavorable reaction which would, of necessity, follow an inflated emotional drive, there would be born within the church a new sense of our world mission and opportunity.

But how can this be accomplished? How can we, with time already at hand for securing pledges for $25,000,000, keep central the fivefold program which means a church *at work* and not become preoccupied with the temptation to *work the church* that we may reach a single goal as quickly as possible? Perhaps the following suggestions offer a partial solution.

First, make the Crusade for Christ a fivefold program and not a financial campaign! In presenting the matter to church councils, official boards, congregations or groups, explain the origins, the development, the program and the goals of the Crusade—all of which point to the incontrovertible fact that it is a program with far-reaching possibilities and implications involving all of the agencies and aims of the Church.

Second, upon the occasion of its first formal presentation, get the message and program of the Crusade to a group as representative of the Church as possible. Let a meeting of the official board be called with the Crusade specifically in mind. Perhaps the board ought to be increased for this particular purpose to include every departmental superintendent of the church school, and every group and organization leader.

Third, let the Crusade for Christ become the program of the local church. As soon as the program and goals of the Crusade are unfolded, leaders of the church will become aware that they stress which, or ought to be, already the goals of any church that is to be alive in a time like this. Let this not be taken for granted but let this official group of the church, whose responsibility it is to lead the program of the Church, adopt the Crusade as the program of their church.

Fourth, let the leadership of the church become aware that the local church is already quite well organized to press on toward the goals of the Crusade for Christ. Already there is the board of education, the finance committee, the missionary council, the membership and evangelism committee, and a committee on world peace.

To accomplish this task no new organizations need to be established, though present ones will doubtless need to be strengthened. To use the organization we already have would seem to accomplish two important things: it will give significance to boards and committees already established, and what is more important, it will make the goals and program of the Crusade not something to be dropped as a special matter at the end of this quadrennium but something which will be the church's business for a long time.

Fifth, make the representative leaders, and eventually everyone in the church, see that the Crusade will never be accomplished if the separate boards and committees attend to their own concerns alone, but that it will take the co-operation of all to see it through. For example, the church school enrollment will not be increased by action of the board of education alone. To accomplish that the whole church must get work. The finance committee cannot alone reach the financial goal, that must become a matter of concern for every individual in the church.

Sixth, use all of the resources of the church to get the Crusade for Christ before everyone who belongs to the church. Methods for this instantly suggest themselves: the pulpit, the organization meetings where the leaders go to work themselves as they share the plan and program of the Crusade, the fellowship suppers, the church bulletin and parish letter, and other means characteristic of each local church. Nor should we forget the local newspaper which, because this is a matter concerning the lives of millions of people in our country, will be more than ordinarily interested in the local church's part in it.

Seventh, give room in all of the promotional meetings for an opportunity of personal consecration. The fellowship of the Upper Room has always been the springboard of a working church.

Thus as the Crusade for Christ unfolds in the local church we shall see it as "Methodism's postwar program." As such it will find people who have not been interested in leadership heretofore suddenly aroused, concerned and willing to share in a program of such magnitude and import.

The Fountain

THE CROSS—PERMANENT EXPERIENCE

Jesus will be in agony until the end of the world; we must not sleep during all that time.

—Blaise Pascal.

LIFE'S REAL WISDOM

Everything I know about history, every bit of experience and observation that has contributed to my thought, has confirmed me in the conviction that the real wisdom of human life is compounded out of the experiences of ordinary men. The utility, the vitality, the fruitage of life does not come from the top to the bottom; it comes, like the natural growth of a great tree, from the soil, up through the trunk into the branches to the foliage and the fruit. The great struggling unknown masses of the men who are at the base of everything are the dynamic force that is lifting the levels of society.

—Woodrow Wilson.

HOW SHEEP GET LOST

How apt and precise is the word "sheep" as a figure of speech. The comparison, when expanded, makes a perfect parable of human behaviour. How do sheep get lost? They start their grazing on ground which is familiar enough to them. But bit by bit they reach out for sweeter grass, until at long last they find themselves on land which is utterly strange to them. Then they bleat out their forlornness. They are driven by "the devices and desires of their own hearts," by their one instinct to feed. As they nibble on from patch to patch, they are quite heedless where they are going.

—From *Down Peacock's Feathers*, by D. R. Davies.

BEATING A CLICHE

Intolerance and ignorance, to beat a cliche to death, are not matters of geography.

—William Rose Benet, in
The Saturday Review of Literature.

GOSPELS WARPED AND WATERED DOWN

If I were preaching today to fundamentalists, I would lay this heavily upon their consciences. All this Biblical literalism, this insistence on the peccadilloes of tradition, this sectarian provincialism in the church, this belated theology, is a travesty of what Christ's gospel ought to mean in such a day as this. I am speaking, however, not so much to fundamentalists as to liberals, and we too have sinned. For a long generation we have been engaged in simplifying the gospel, in saying to the intellectually perplexed, "You need not believe this to be a Christian and you need not believe that." We have pared down the gospel, shrunk and reduced it until in our churches preachers have sometimes seemed to be playing a game to see how little a man can believe and still be a Christian.

—From *A Great Time to Be Alive*,
by Harry Emerson Fosdick.

THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH

I believe in the *catholic* Church, one great spiritual communion. Some Protestants are afraid of this word "catholic." That is most unfortunate. To suggest that we are not members of the Universal Church of Christ is both embarrassing and humiliating. For this term is *inclusive*, not *exclusive*. It refers not to one phase of ecclesiasticism but to *all Christianity*.

—From *We Believe*, by G. Ray Jordan.

CALLING "NIGHT" THE "DAY"

In the present ubiquity of ignorance, one cannot but suspect that many who call themselves Christians do not understand what the word means, and that some who would vigorously repudiate Christianity are more Christian than many who maintain it.

—From *The Idea of a Christian Society*, by T. S. Eliot.

PREACHING AND MEN'S BLIND SPOTS

A young assistant upon beginning his duties in a large city church was called in by the minister for an orientation conversation. The minister advised his assistant to steer clear of all social issues in his preaching and teaching (for example, the race question), "for our people here," he said, "do not care to hear those subjects discussed." Sometime later, the assistant said this in conversation with another person: "The minister is right in warning to keep off social issues. After all, Jesus did not go around causing trouble. He did not disturb people. What we need to do is to preach a 'fuller' life to the people, and social issues will take care of themselves." This assistant may do well to study the life and teachings of Jesus, and further, the assistant should realize that all people have certain blind spots regarding the vital issues of life and that it is the duty of the minister to point out these blind spots to his people.

—James Allen Knight, in *Christian Horizons*.

FOOTPRINTS

A young nobleman found himself in a little village in Cornwall, Eng. He vainly sought a place where something stronger than water could be obtained. Impatiently he inquired of an old native, "How is it that I cannot get a glass of liquor anywhere in this wretched village of yours?"

The old man bowed humbly, but there was a proud flash in his eyes as he answered quietly:

"My lord, something over a hundred years ago a man named John Wesley came to these parts." And with that, the old peasant walked on.

—*Virginia Methodist Advocate.*

DEMOCRACY'S LIGHT

When I stood in a certain pulpit and I opened the large Bible, the pulpit light shining upon its pages lighted up my face; when I closed the Bible my face was dark. As long as America has an open Bible, the face of the American man will be lighted up; when that Bible is closed, then the light will die from the face of the American man. Democracy gets its light and inspiration from the Eternal Word.

—From *The Christ of the American Road,* by E. Stanley Jones.

LESSON FROM HISTORY

It seems that history shows that it does not pay to give up your moral concepts, that it is dangerous for your own soul and safety to abandon the principles of every true religion: to help your neighbor when he is in need, to oppose injustice on whomever it may be inflicted. Today you permit the evil to spread—tomorrow it will reach you.

—Toni Sender, in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* July, 1941.

STEWARDSHIP'S FIRST REQUIREMENT

The hope of the world—the sole hope—lies in those who are seeing things because they are seeing God.

—From *When Christ Controls,* by John M. Versteeg.

PRELUDE TO DEADLY SECULARITY

Failure of religion is a prelude always to a deadly secularity. Secularity supposes temporality. It is a capitulation to the here and now, to practicality. In it a dimension has been lost, or obviated, or ignored. It signifies a fracture of the faith, a loss of the sense of the presence of God, a denial. It divorces man's act from the permanent implications of his action; or it gives to his act only temporal implications. Meaning is localized, having no unimpeachable significance. "Man, proud man, dressed in a little brief authority" falls prey to endless divagation and remorse.

—From *The Crisis of Faith,* by Stanley Romaine Hopper.

TO DEFEND LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE . . .

It behooves every man who values liberty of conscience for himself, to resist invasion of it in the case of others; or their case may, by change of circumstances, become his own.

—Thomas Jefferson, in a letter to Benjamin Rush.

EVIL AND THE COWARD'S HEART

. . . The terror of evil in the world springs from the heart of a coward. It is the normal echo of that effeminate attitude towards life that holds out, as life's ideal, uninterrupted coddling, endless days of petting, coaxing, protection. This is the view of life that shrinks from sharing the weariness and discouragement of struggle, the glory of personal victory, because of the possibilities of failure.

—From *A Companion to the Summa,* by Walter Farrell.

MINDS ARE HARD TO RULE!

If men's minds were as easily controlled as their tongues, every king would sit safely on his throne, and government by compulsion would cease; for every subject would shape his life according to the intentions of his rulers, and would esteem a thing true or false, good or evil, just or unjust, in obedience to their dictates.

—Spinoza in *Tractatus Theologia-Politicus.*

RELIGIOUS—IF THEY HAVE PROFUNDITY . . .

In every age the most comprehensive thinkers have found in the religion of their time and country something they could accept, interpreting and illustrating that religion so as to give it depth and universal application. Even the heretics and atheists, if they have profundity, turn out after a while to be forerunners of some new orthodoxy.

—George Santayana, in *Reason in Religion.*

CHANCE VERSUS TRUE ART

Kepler, a famous German astronomer of three centuries ago, was once called to the supper table by his wife after he had spent the day studying the nature of the universe. A salad was served which he especially liked. He looked at it for a time and said: "It seems, then, as if pewter dishes, leaves of lettuce, grains of salt, drops of vinegar and oil, and slices of eggs had been floating about in the air from all eternity, it might at last happen by chance that there would come a salad."

His wife retorted, "Not a salad so nice as mine."

—From *Remember Now . . .* by Walter Dudley Cavert.

STATE OF PRESENT-DAY PREACHING

If our people do not read the Bible, neither do our preachers expound it. A reading of the topics listed in the church notices in the Saturday newspapers does not give much ground for believing that the exposition of the Scriptures is having a large place in our pulpits. In fact, expository preaching is apparently a lost art. Too often the procedure is, first, to prepare a sermon and secondly, to hunt about for a text to fit it. This is called preaching the gospel, and perhaps it is. At least the text is likely to have some solid worth.

—William G. Chanter, in *Protestantism.*

ALL MEN ARE ALIKE!

The first time I spoke to the patients in a hospital for the insane I asked the doctor in charge whether there were any subjects which it might be well for me to avoid. There seemed to me to be no advantage in needlessly exciting some six hundred people already sufficiently dangerous to themselves or society so that they had been confined in such a place.

"No," said the doctor, soothingly. "Talk about anything you want to. You see, they do not take it personally. Each one will think you are talking about some other person."

—From *As He Passed By,* by Allan Knight Chalmers.

REVIEWS

"TO STAY NO LONGER WITH THE LETTER"

IN YOUR BOOK SECTION

OUR quotation is from Gregory of Nazianzen's famous oration over Basil the Great. Gregory, describing how his every impulse for goodness and truth was stirred by the influence of Basil, expressed the true spirit of Christian learning. Gregory said of Basil: "When I meet with the . . . exhibitions of Christian truth which he sets forth . . . I am persuaded to stay no longer with the letter, nor to rest my look merely on the surface; but to pass beyond, to go on from depth to depth, amid light still discovering light, till I reach the utmost limit of truth."

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At Coburn Methodist Church, Zanesville, Ohio, N. Clifford Bangham has worked out a reading program for parishioners. On page 42, he tells how it works.

A few years ago, Smiley D. Blanton collaborated with Norman Vincent Peale to write *Faith Is the Answer*, a book which grew out of their common tasks in counseling. Dr. Blanton, professor of psychiatry at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, reviews *The War and Mental Health in England.*

Richard M. Cameron's contribution is a critical examination of H. G. Wells' *Crux Ansata.* Dr. Cameron is professor of church history, Boston University School of Theology.

D. F. Fleming, student of public opinion and ways of influencing it, reviews *Mandate from the People.* He is professor of political science, Vanderbilt University, and author of several books.

The viewpoint of the pastor and teacher of religious education is the viewpoint of George D. Greer, Methodist pastor, North Manchester, Ind., who discusses *The Rise of Christian Education.* Pastor Greer, Ph.D., is former professor of psychology and religious education at Taylor University.

Contributing Editor John O. Gross reviews *And God Was There.*

Walter M. Scheuermann, reviewer of *The Crisis of Faith,* is pastor of First Methodist Church, Indianola, Iowa. He received degrees from Simpson College, Garrett, and Northwestern.

This is the first opportunity THE PASTOR has had to present A. J. Walton as a contributing editor. Dr. Walton, superintendent, Department of Town and Country Work, Methodist Board of Missions and Church Extension, is author of *The Church in the Country.* His review: *A Study of Rural Society.*

W. Ralph Ward, Jr., reviewer of *It All Happened Once Before,* is pastor at Manchester, Conn.

The People on Today's Issues

MANDATE FROM THE PEOPLE, *by Jerome S. Bruner. Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 278 pp., $2.75.*

Jerome S. Bruner

This is a book which tells what the American people think and believe about the issues of today. Such a statement could not have been made a few years ago, before the scientific sampling of public opinion had been perfected. Now Mr. Bruner can say what our people think because he has studied the opinion polls. As associate director of the Office of Public Opinion Research at Princeton University, he has had access to all the polls—the Gallup Polls, *Fortune* Polls, and others. Hence he can say with confidence just what our attitudes are.

The book is divided into two parts, a section on the World Scene and one on the Home Front. Of the two kinds of problems, our people are most interested in domestic issues. Even in the midst of this unprecedented war only 16 per cent consider international affairs their first concern. Fifty-three per cent are more interested in domestic issues, and the remainder had no opinion or could not make up their minds.

The second half of the book, dealing with our own internal questions, reveals that the great majority of our people strongly favor social insurance, not to create a new form of society but to provide for "the rainy day." Fully 94 per cent are for old-age pensions, 84 per cent for job insurance, 79 per cent for aid to students and 73 per cent for works relief. When the comprehensive National Resources Planning Board program for extending social security was announced, 75 per cent were for it, yet interest quickly died out, perhaps because of our war prosperity. Only the nation's business leaders opposed the plan. The author de-

scribes their attitude as "one of almost sullen dissent." Only 49 per cent of the business men favored old-age pensions, but 91 per sent saw them coming anyway. On job insurance only 35 per cent of the business leaders were for the principle, though 84 per cent thought the government would provide it.

In social insurance thinking the British are far ahead of us. They have based their system on two fundamental ideas, "National minimum" and "common pool." No citizen who will work should fall below a national minimum of subsistence comfort, and what he gets comes out of a common pool to which he himself has contributed. To the British, social security does not mean "going on relief"; it means *keeping from* going on relief. These sensible ideas are still foreign to us. We insist on applying means tests and making assistance closely akin to poor relief.

On the vital issue of social security our conservatives also reject comprehensive planning, abolishing the N.R.P.B. outright. We must wait for another depression to advance our social security plans. If and when it comes, the demand for action will be compelling. For every person wanting to know more about maintaining post-war peace, there are three who want to know more about assured jobs. The "people are well ahead of their government in demanding that something be done." Seventy-five per cent believe that a central agency should be set up *now*, with full authority to demobilize our war economy and provide full employment. The lag is in the Congress. Yet the people want business, labor, everybody in on national planning. They do not want a government job alone, but 66 per cent believe that government help is required. On the questions of guaranteeing jobs, 80 per cent of Democratic voters are for it, and only 59 per cent of the Republicans, but the majority is clear in both cases.

Chapter 10, "The Future of Free Enterprise," discloses a sharp cleavage of opinion on the general issue of government control over business. Opinion is about equally divided, but when a specific abuse arises, or an economic crisis develops, there is no serious cleavage. We like our economic system and are "willing and eager to live with it," but we expect it to work, and if it does not we demand that the government make it work. We do not fear government as such. Eighty-five per cent favor anti-monopolistic measures by the government.

On the care of the returning soldier, opinion is united that "any measure which protects the soldier from post-demobilization unemployment is better than any measure which does not." The public also favors the reemployment of the soldiers through the United States Employment Service (47 per cent) or a new and more powerful government agency (37 per cent). Eighty-three per cent of our women agree that the returning men should have first choice of jobs.

On the issues of foreign policy, the author explains our torpor in the years before the war as due to blindness rather than false values, and he finds that the blindness was the child of cynicism which spawned after the last war. "From our highest idealistic passion of 'Making the World Safe for Democracy' we were cast down to a nagging partisan squabble about the League, a squabble in which all the earlier noble issues got hopelessly lost." Thereafter we lapsed into suspicion of foreign powers. "The Hearst press and a generation of Red-baiters kept constantly alive the bogey of Communism and Russia." Even at the end of a grisly civil war in Spain 60 per cent of us thought the outcome did not concern us, and in 1938 only two in every ten Americans were willing to admit that our failure to participate in the League was a cause of the European crisis. In this picture of blind dritfing, pacifism also played a part. Of those who opposed aid to Britain, the largest number (27 per cent) based their position "on a belief in pacifism as the best policy."

For the future, from 70 to 80 per cent of our people, depending on the region, favor our taking an active part in world affairs hereafter. In November, 1942, many counties in Massachusetts voted on the calling of a "convention of representatives of all free peoples to frame a Federal Constitution under which they may unite in a Democratic World Government," and 75 per cent of those who voted did so in the affirmative.

This expression in favor of a real federation may have been exceptional, but opinion in favor of taking an active part in some kind of confederation is overwhelming. A whole series of polls showed less than 20 per cent as opposed. Almost 75 per cent are willing to grant the United Nations some power over the size of our armed forces. As many are willing to have part of the Army stay abroad, for occupation and policing, and 82 per cent are for continued rationing to help the ruined nations.

In other words, we are ready to pay the costs of world organization. Whether we are to miss the boat again is up to our leaders. "Our leaders can inflame us to action. They can also let us slip back into sententious solipsism. Theirs is the burden of proof." This reviewer would add, however, that it is our duty to see that our leaders do not become fainthearted. Everyman's home will be in the path of the giant rocket bombs of a Third World War.

In one direction the outlook is dark. Many of us have not seen that world unity and peace are incompatible with high tariffs and economic nationalism. In December, 1943, 78 per cent did not know what the reciprocal trade agreements were. The polls reveal that the poorer people, those most insecure economically, are still vulnerable to suggestions that their jobs may be at stake if tariffs are lowered. It is still "easy for us to fall into the trap of self-sufficiency."

On this crucial question the author finds that the press and all our leaders have failed to present the economic facts of life to the people. We have become internationalist in a political sense, but "our economic thinking is still dominated by the doctrine of protectionism."

Other significant chapters deal with "Americans and Britain," "Russia," and "The Fate of the Enemy." This is one of the most useful books published in recent months. No leader of public opinion can afford not to have it, for without it he cannot know what the needs for leadership are.

A fifty-page appendix presents a wealth of poll figures as footnotes in support of the text. The book is simply and clearly written and it contains many illuminating graphs which show at a glance the trends of our thinking. We no longer need to guess what public opinion is on either domestic or foreign issues. We have only to read this book to know.—***D. F. Fleming.***

The Weighing OF WESTERN

THE CRISIS OF FAITH, *by Stanley R. Hopper. Abingdon-Cokesbury, 328 pp., $2.75.*

Walter M. Scheuermann

Today when "New Voices" are with us, and when tables are groaning with books, how refreshing to discover an author who can write a book that not only merits reading, but demands study. Dr. Hopper has written such a book.

A few years ago Prof. P. A. Sorokin stirred me greatly with his analysis of Western Culture in the book, *The Crisis of Our Age*, in which he marked the path of our decline from that of an idealistic to a sensate culture. Hopper weighs our Western culture in the light of the Christian faith and finds it wanting. Ours is a culture that has severed itself from its roots.

Part I sets forth the "Aspects of the Crisis." The thinking person knows we have come to an awful impasse. He says in effect, "How did we get that way?" Dr. Hopper through careful analysis, illustrations and documentations shows us how. In this "The Midnight Hour" two fundamentals of our heritage stand over against each other. Our Fatal Heritage and Our Heritage of Faith. The former has led to a suffocation of the spirit. It has manifested itself in "the nihilism of the Continental schools, the esoteric defeatism of modern poets, the rise of totalitarianism,—and the baffling indifference of the people."

Salvation lies over the route of Our Heritage of Faith that must be rediscovered. This is not an enslaving worship of the glorious past, however, but rather a light that reveals the road to tomorrow. The road of tomorrow leads through the domain of the Christian truth of yesterday progressively revised. The central point of this Heritage of Faith is the Cross.

Our fatal heritage has led us into modern secularism, both in aims and practice. Sorokin's "sensate culture" ideal has taken possession of our souls. Dr. Hopper discovers in us a fatal contradiction. This contradiction within ourselves and our history leaves us enervated. Our disease is a "dialectical deceit, which "leaves everything standing (churches, laws, customs, dignities, institutions, works, cultures), but cunningly empties (them) of their significance."

While reading this volume I found myself comparing it to *The Predicament of Modern Man* by D. E. Trueblood. He speaks of our culture as a "Cut-Flower Civilization." We love the ethical flowers and wish to preserve them, but give no heed to the life-giving roots and stems that bore them. These two men are quite in agreement at this point. The new man of the Renaissance recovered the Christianity of the Bible, but knew not that these flowers grew from this faith-stalk. The dignity of man, the rights of the individual, the appeal to freedom, to man's creative responsibility in history, to brotherhood, to the world as tangible reality in space and time, are Christian notions. They are the flowers, but what about the roots?

One of the causes for the Crisis of Faith is found in man's experiment in thought that took no account of first principles. The autonomous mind started "from scratch." The new Messiah was reason. Christian faith was shunted aside. Reason turned in upon itself. Man had to think harder about thinking, for there were no stars in this night. All became darkness. Man lost himself in "a tower of hopeless subjectivity."

In the experiment in culture, the Renaissance influence persuaded the mind of man to leave Luther's prophetic emphasis that set man "directly before God"—man not as a self-sufficient being but as sinful, whose salvation was in the love of God. This new culture thought perfection resided in man, man was naturally good whose saving power was found in himself. While the culture has some achievements to its credit, the liabilities are great.

In "The Interlude," Dr. Hopper philosophizes about our predicament using the story of Alice and the White Knight. Like the White Knight, we must know when we see the world backwards. How are we to recover ourselves? Not by a partial reaction, like Russia's, and a plunge into Communism. But we must go back to an absolute starting point in the Cross.

The steps outward are along the lines Alice takes, recollection, thinking, discovery, faith that gives Alice assurance that she is a real person, yes even a Queen. Something must stab us wide awake. Ours is a world of decision and destiny. We cannot live by "coasting." We must have the will to believe.

We are made poignantly aware of our "lostness" in the examination of our culture by this author's deep insight and well marshalled arguments and illustrations. In this second section he moves toward the way out—Our Heritage of Faith.

Man seeks for a lever and a fulcrum by which he can move the world. This lever is found in the Christian faith in the Incarnation—the Eternal in history—and Faith is the fulcrum by which the world can be moved. The Christian standpoint is set forth not as a hypothetical proposition, but as an arbitrary position, and man is challenged to live as if it were true and he will find it so. "He that willeth to know, shall know." "All dogmas," says the author, "reduce to one dogma. It is only at the point of the crossing of the arms upon the Cross that one sees well." This is done, not theoretically but through the sharing in *the fellowship of* [*Christ's*] *suffering.*

CULTURE

Stanley R. Hopper

From the Christian point of view, man is not the measure of all things. Man is the measured and God's will is the criterion for man. Man must be redeemed from the theory of salvation through knowledge which is an appeal of pride to the mind, to a faith in revelation as wisdom for the understatnding of the soul. Christian personalism comes out of our yesterdays and points the way to a new tomorrow. God is the "Thou" related to the finite "I," apprehended on a personal relationship basis.

The author supports his position again and again by such worthy authorities as Augustine, Pascal, and Kierkegaard. He believes man must discover the darkness and despair of his soul. This despair comes not only out of our present-day failure and moral breakdown, but through a deep insight into the meaning of Christ. Man must find his life by losing it, by faith, by *conversion* which is reached through *repentance*. The power of the Holy Spirit which is "supreme and essential" follows and confirms true faith.

The predicament of modern man is the Crisis of faith. There is no salvation in our own wit and ingenuity, nor in the vaunted faith of the self-sufficient man, who finds perfection within himself. There must be a new birth of faith. This new birth of faith comes through a re-study of the history of Christian faith. We must pass through the lost domain of the Christian truth to the point of the Cross, for only so can we revise it progressively. In other words man finds God in the deep tragedy of the Cross, which calls him into judgment, and into a mood of repentance that makes him know that in his pride and sin there is no salvation.

But the Cross reveals not only the God of judgment, but the God of redemption who promises a new hope, a new birth, a new Jerusalem. *Behold I make all things new.* This new born man is the new creation of God. "A new spirituality is coming to birth in the world. The travail and agony of these times marks the slow return of our civilization up the dolorous slopes of Golgotha."

The reading of *The Crisis of Faith* has given me a perspective and a hope. For as Dr. Hopper says, our crisis has in it mighty potentialities for our faith. To comprehend the thesis calls for some acquaintance in the field of theological thought, and a familiarity with the vocabulary of philosophical writers. I could wish a book so clear and penetrating in its analysis of Western Culture, and so constructive in its Christian interpretations of man's salvation might be written for the perusal of laymen, too—***Walter M. Scheuermann.***

The Prophets in Modern Speech

IT ALL HAPPENED ONCE BEFORE, *by Roy L. Smith. Abingdon-Cokesbury, 136 pp., $1.*

In the Mendenhall Lectures of 1943 delivered at DePauw University, Dr. Smith has given laymen and preachers a timely book which reports with accuracy and clarity the unfolding of a timeless message. The history of Israel, beginning with her birth of self-consciousness in the land of Goshen through the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. before the onslaught of Nebuchadrezzar's mighty forces, is clearly delineated.

But the author's purpose is more than a matter of reporting, for he seeks to interpret the idea of "mishpat," "that social justice which is implied in the Covenant with Yahweh." as it developed in the thinking of the eighth- and seventh-century prophets, conditioned by their individual backgrounds and affected as they were by continuously changing circumstances. In doing this, the author describes the thoroughly ethical and social nature of the religion of Israel.

The manner of the journalist and the mind of the scholar are both found in this book. David is called a "young freebooter." The band, gibborim, with which he associated himself during the reign of Saul are in one place called "strike breakers," and on another occasion are spoken of as "ancient gestapo." Those who corrupted the courts of the eighth century are described as a "Tammany ring." Egypt is called an "arch conniver" which "was ready to fight the Assyrians to the last Hebrew," and Amos was "one of the nobodies who made up the masses of the inarticulates."

All of this makes perfectly good reading, but why a perfectly good series of chapter titles, each of which describes what the chapter contains, is spoiled by including one called "The Coolidge Prosperity" is more than this reviewer can understand. Throughout the book the best insights of contemporary scholarship are incorporated into the interpretations both of the prophetic writings and of the historical books which were unquestionably written to support religious convictions. The preface warns against interpreting the prophets as "mystics speaking for two ages and two civilizations at the same time."

For preachers and teachers of Bible classes, who want to make religion contemporaneous and at the same time firmly grounded on the great teachings of the Old Testament, this book will stimulate the imagination and provoke thought.—***W. Ralph Ward, Jr.***

Jesus as His Brother Knew Him

THE BROTHER, *by Dorothy Clarke Wilson. Presbyterian Board, 325 pp., $2.50.*

Dorothy Clarke Wilson is in complete control of the mechanics of her art. She has mastered the characters, the general situation, and the technical construction of her novel, and as a result of that mastery, she has made it possible for the reader to enjoy all its strangeness and beauty. To have done so is no mean accomplishment, for the nature of the material is such that the novel might easily have become a rambling account of the life of James rather than one which is shaped according to strict demands of artistic organization.

We see James first as a boy of six awaiting the return of his father, mother, and brother from Jerusalem where they had gone to celebrate the Feast of the Passover. But the Nazareth caravan is late, for as James presently learns, his Brother, 12 years old, had slipped away from the travelers, and the caravan was delayed while Joseph and Mary looked for their son. They found Him in the Temple.

The novel interprets the character of Jesus through his relations with his family, and his neighbors in Nazareth, but more particularly through his influence upon his brother James. The story reaches its climax when the intimate companionship between the two is broken because James, a strict adherent to the law's letter, cannot understand the actions of Jesus who adheres only to its spirit.

Only after the Crucifixion does James understand fully the character of Jesus, and then only after he has first blindly followed his Brother's precepts. He says near the end of the book before he goes, on the Sabbath, to give comfort to the dying Malluch, his longtime enemy, "I'm doing this because it's what Jesus would have done, not because I understand why he would have done it."

Fused into the narrative, and thus making more dramatic the ministry of Jesus, are the whisperings heard here and there among the Galileans about the coming of the long-awaited Messiah. Judas the Galilean had failed; Barabbas had not been able to remove the Roman yoke; Jesus had met an ignoble death.

Some said He arose on the third day. " 'The Magdalene said she saw him,' said the wife of Clopas musingly.

"Salome pursed her lips. 'The Magdalene is always saying queer things. Besides she herself admitted her eyes were so dim with weeping she thought at first it was the gardener.' "—***Vesta Whitley.***

Reading on Demobilization

The Department of Christian Education of Adults, Methodist General Board of Education, issues a bi-monthly bulletin on demobilization. Six bulletins have appeared:

No. 1. *Survey Worksheets*
No. 2. *Plans for Demobilization*
No. 3. *Serving Those in Service*
No. 4. *No calories in Confetti*
No. 5. *Coming Home—to What?*
No. 6. *The Long Road Back*

The following reading material on demobilization has been suggested in these six bulletins:

Demobilization and Readjustment. National Resources Planning Board, June, 1943, Government Printing Office.

Post-war Training and Adjustment. Institute of Adult Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1942.

Our Servicemen and Economic Security. Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, May, 1943.

The American Family and World War II. Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Sept., 1943.

Jobs for All. A special supplement of *The Nation,* Nov. 27, 1943.

Report of the Post-war Economic Policy and Planning Committee of the Senate, (Walter F. George, ch'man) Oct. 14, 1943.

After the War—1918-1920. National Resources Planning Board, June, 1943.

The Church and Returning Service Personnel. Federal Council of Churches, April, 1944.

Marching Home—Educational and Social Adjustments After the War, by Morse A. Cartwright, published for the Institute of Adult Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1944, 25c.

Psychology for the Fighting Man. National Research Council, *Infantry Journal,* Penguin Books, 1943, 25c.

Report on War and Postwar Adjustment Policies, by Bernard M. Baruch and John M. Hancock, Superintendent of Documents, Gov't Printing Office, Feb. 15, 1944, 10c.

As We Win. Publicity Department, Congress of Industrial Organizations, 5c.

The Chaplain Serves. Office of the Chief of Chaplains, Army Service Forces, War Department, Washington, D. C.

Post-war Plans of National Interdenominational Agencies. Friendship Press, 25c.

A Syllabus on the Church and Returning Service Men. Committee on Army and Navy Chaplains, Congregational Christian Churches, 5c.

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Christian Education

DOWN THE CENTURIES

THE RISE OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION, *by Lewis J. Sherrill. Macmillan, 349 pp., $2.50.*

Church historian Harnack is quoted by the author as saying: "No religion gains anything through time, it only loses. If a hurricane does not pass over it and purify it again and again, it gets stifled in its own withered foliage." The reader becomes increasingly aware of this fact as he follows the author down a long trail of two thousand years, beginning with the efforts of the early Hebrews and leading up to the dawn of the Renaissance.

It is never a question as to whether there is education in connection with religion; if the latter lives at all, it must perforce have the former. Religion creaets educational procedures, which, in turn, produce more of the same kind of religion.

Professor Sherrill observes: "It [the 2000-year period] reveals uniquely well, the correspondence between a changing Christianity and its changing education, each changing until at last both of them thoroughly violate the original premises of Christianity itself."

"On the negative side, this long period shows exceptionally well the futility of attempting to remake the education apart from a rebirth of the church itself."

Genius in religious education is found near the beginning of the story, among the early Hebrews who found a way to include both adults and children in the educative process. The mystery of the survival of the Jew has been a recurrent motif in any account of that people; the key to unlock that mystery may well be found in their admirable and ever practical technique of religious education.

The family household was the school. Children from the age of three were considered fit candidates for instruction. Religious training was as regular as any other phase of household activity. Memorials were erected with a view to raising the question among the children of a future generation: "What meaneth these stones?"

The people might be carried off bodily into exile, there to remain for generations, the Holy City might be destroyed and the temple left with no stone upon another, but the result would be an intensification of the program of religious training; the family rather than the temple was the

George Dixon Greer

pulsating heart of religion. Because this is true the Jew remains a Jew in spite of all the bludgeonings of circumstance.

Out of the Babylonian exile came the Torah and its power. "When Torah was thus increasingly reverenced, when it was regarded as a person, existing before the world and immutable, obviously Torah has the supreme value in Jewish eyes. It is revelation but revelation personified. Two duties flow from this conception: Torah must be known, and Torah must be obeyed. Here, then, is the content of education. Jewish education is teaching and studying Torah. The study of Torah was more important than anything else in the world, and the whole universe had less value than one single prescription of Torah." In the 1,400 years of the Christian era, which are covered in this study, one looks in vain for anything resembling this, the intensive study of that which is regarded as the inspired word of God. To find its equal in that period we would have to discover a program of Christian education in which the Bible and the Bible alone was the subject matter to be learned and practiced.

The teaching of Torah was regarded as an act of worship. Teaching and revelation were but two inseparable phases of the same process. The synagogue came into being as a place where Torah would be taught; preaching and teaching were not distinguishable, and the author feels that the separating of these two functions in the modern church has done considerable damage. In spite of an exile of 1,900 years, Judaism lives today because it can endure without formal schools, without temple or synagogue if need be, because the essence of religion passes from generation to generation through the household.

Trained in the Torah, the Galilean Carpenter came to maturity in a world where the Roman and Jewish ways of life were in constant conflict. With his keen insight into human nature, He saw that the deeper needs of man could not be satisfied by the Torah alone. He came proclaiming a kingdom above the temporalities of the passing scenes. In doing so He often came into conflict with the Torah and its defenders. Many were the conflicts between him and the scholars. They were constantly amazed to find this "unlettered" Galilean so perfectly familiar with their own weapons, and able to use them with telling effect against their system. The Torah, as they interpreted it, bound men's souls with countless legalisms; the kingdom as he explained it set men free from all earthly masters by causing them to bow in true loyalty to the God of the universe. ". . . the kingdom of God in Jesus' teaching is not a program of social reform, neither is it a symbol for an ideal social order. To look to the Kingdom of God expecting it to be these, is to reproduce in our day almost precisely those very political, economic, and social expectations which Jesus was most careful to avoid." The Kingdom meant the sovereignty of God over the individual.

The ethic of the kingdom grew out of the two-fold conception of God as King and as Father. This ethic made men free, but, as was discovered later, it lost its power unless constantly supported by the dynamic quality of personal religious experience. Sin was not merely violation of the law; it was the degradation and impoverishment of personality. Sin was sin because it hurt people. The deepest sin was found among the "holiest," the officials of religion, who let religion shut God off from man.

Lewis J. Sherrill

After the birth of the church, religious education becomes and remains for some time, the teaching and learning about a person: what He was and what He said. In the early church the teacher was a distinct part of the ministry, and teaching existed in a number of varieties. The earliest Christian writings were for educational purposes; to inform and enlighten the converts coming into the church from a pagan world.

As the church found its way through the first three centuries the tradition grew, and was used as a means of instruction leading up to baptism, a course of study that often consumed years of time before the candidate was considered acceptable. To become a Christian in that hostile world was a serious undertaking for pupil and teacher alike. But as paganism became more confused, Christianity became conscious of increasing power until Constantine decided it would be wiser to make an ally of the erstwhile enemy who could not be defeated by frontal assault.

The church, losing its spirit of adventure and sensing its growing power in the declining days of the empire, began its great attempt to bring all the world under its dominion. During this period religious education reached such a low ebb that abysmal ignorance characterized both peasant and priest. Sporadic attempts at bettering the situation yielded little fruit. Attention had been turned away from the great Christian tradition to sacramentalism. Since God spoke and worked through the sacraments, education was not necessary. What training was available had to do with the symbols of the faith, which now had displaced the realities for which they stood.

For nearly eight hundred years the activities of the mind were stifled. "The spiraling descent into ever increasing ignorance could only have been checked by the most vigorous measures, if indeed at all. . . . The resulting educational problem was bequeathed to the church of the middle ages: how shall a grossly ignorant people be taught by an increasingly ignorant clergy, when there are virtually no schools for clergy or laity, in church or state?"

Not until the twelfth century were the stirrings of an intellectual awakening noticeable. The universities were being born, and scholasticism was trying hard to reconcile faith and reason: making an attempt to free the mind while still under the domination of ecclesiastical authority. The logic and philosophy as seen in the schools of the period eventually came to represent a brand of reasoning beyond the ability of any ordinary mortal to follow. Reason, not daring to go beyond authority, made itself ridiculous.

Thus, a five hundred year effort to reconcile reason and authority was barren of real fruitage. Only a revolution in the human spirit could free men from the incubus that the church had become. This revolution began when Wyclif put the Bible into the language of the common man.

At this point the reader is left to ponder over the journey he has made, and to wonder a bit just how the author will wend his way through the six hundred years preceding our own day; this strange era of ours when we are more afraid of our liberties than we are of any possible bondage, those liberties which threaten to destroy us unless we can find some spiritual *modus operandi* for balancing individual liberty with social control.

The volume is rich in implications for the teaching of religion. In our day we have tried many experiments and found them wanting. We are not getting the results for which we hoped with our new techniques. We are not sure why. It is dismaying to find our "better" Christian education accompanied by an alarming exodus from the church school. Have we lost some essential element along the way? Did we throw out the baby with the bathwater? Have we erred in some old way without recognizing the error in its modern dress? Such questions and some provocative answers are suggested as the reader follows the trail marked out so well in the book. Professor Sherrill has done a worthy and scholarly job.—***George D. Greer.***

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Guide for Study
OF RURAL CULTURE

A. J. Walton

A STUDY OF RURAL SOCIETY, *by J. H. Kolb and Edmund DeS. Brunner. Houghton-Mifflin, 694 pp., $4.*

This storehouse of valuable information for rural pastors and leaders is penetrating and informing in its study of the many phases of rural life. Originally written in 1935, it attracted much attention and led to further interest in rural life studies. The resulting discussions and some helpful criticism of the text gave a new impetus to rural writing.

In the revision the authors have taken into consideration criticisms, trends in rural life and thought, the need for some added subjects, their findings in a third study of certain rural trade centers, and the results of local surveys in Wisconsin.

The revision is substantially like the 1935 issue. The chief difference lies in the alterations of sections and chapters dealing with standards of living, agriculture, with new sections on agricultural labor, recreation, public health and welfare, and sociability and a chapter on rural youth. All tables are brought up to date. The changes are helpful, and one is led to ask whether this experience in revision may not lead the authors to a more vigorous revision some time after the war.

Considerable attention is given to business phases of agriculture, the economics of rural life, rural local government, and the national policy for rural life. This adds to the value of the book for the church worker, and the experienced student of sociology. It sets the sociological factors in a broader and more life-like frame of reference. This mixture of business, economics and government may confuse the novice as to the true scope and nature of sociology unless he should study with this text the more concise texts on rural sociology which each of the authors has written. The trained sociologist, while aware of sharper limits upon sociology and science, knows that all branches of science are only relatively pure science.

The fact that rural and urban elements of life are treated as interdependent saves the study from lopsidedness. This treatment makes the "Town-Country Community" basis of the book more normal and meaningful. The authors clearly demonstrate that rural America cannot modify its program, its life, or its services to the nation independently of the whole national life. America has been inclined to overemphasize urban life in education, in the press, and in the availability of conveniences. Thus an appreciative study of rural life is timely.

The study begins with a consideration of the group life of rural people. It presents a fine analysis of the relationships involved in the family, neighborhood, village, county town, country and cities. There is an excellent discussion of the farm family, and family farming is recommended as an offset to the terrific population losses to the city.

The authors point up sharply a phase of inter-relatedness of the farm family with the urban family by showing that if the size of the farm family were represented by 100, the size of families in small towns would be 86, in cities 79, and in metropolitan areas 66. This is based on the 1930 census, and that of 1940 shows a continued shrinkage in urban family size. On the average the rural areas have a population surplus of almost 50 per cent and the urban areas a deficit of ever 20 per cent. Problems of education, health care, burdened resources, and insufficient opportunity to acquire skills are cited as arising in rural areas because of this surplus population. Such problems reach beyond rural responsibility and are of national importance.

The second section of the book considers the origins, characteristics, composition and mobility of the people. It is made clear that rural America has been a vital part of the melting pot of races and cultures. Regional differences in characteristics, their influence, and importance are emphasized. The chapter on migration is now outdated, but its principles are worth considering in the study of the tremendous war and postwar rural migrations. We shall probably have for the next quarter of a century the most mobile population ever experienced in the United States, and we are ill prepared to face the situation.

In part three the occupation of the rural people, with the attendant business, economic and institutional factors, is discussed. This is the section which provides such a large frame of economic, legislative and governmental reference for sociological discussion, and which has occasioned the criticism of some sociologists. The matters discussed are of such importance, owing to the way they will influence future sociological change, that they would seem to have a place in the text.

This reviewer believes that the serious problems involving the farm laborer and the migrant worker need more attention than is given them by this text. Added consideration at this point would give more meaning to the excellent statement on social uses of land and the co-operative movement among rural people.

Part four is a vigorous study of the organization and agencies which have been developed to serve the rural population. Their functions are aptly outlined, their influence in shaping rural life considered, and the changes and trends influencing them noted. This is a significant section for the rural pastor. Chapter 20 deals with religion and the rural church, but it cannot be fully comprehended unless it is seen in its relation to the whole book and especially to part four. On the whole the church statement is excellent. One exception the reviewer thinks too glaring to let pass. That is the statement that "the ideal situation and declared objective would be a full time resident pastor for every church." For the rural church this is not ideal, practicable, or

sociologically sound. A study of 1,069 rural circuits showed the area covered and miles traveled by the rural pastor was no more than that required of the average city parish of like membership. The roads are not so smooth, but the time extended the pastor for visits and the limited conflicting influences help small circuits to fit into the sociological picture much better than would the one-church-one-pastor scheme.

There is a wholesome criticism of the emphasis on preaching at the expense of other needed features of the rural church program. Church workers need to read and consider carefully this section.

The chapters on recreation, health, welfare, and sociability are important for every rural worker. Here are fields where the rural leadership has fumbled long enough. In these areas they should read up, look up, and work up to some creative purpose.

Part five seeks to set forth on a national scale some of the apparent trends and the policies for the future. Four years have passed since this was written and time has demonstrated much which the authors had to say. Time has indicated also some new emphases in trends which the reader can well discover from current reading. In this section the authors face the questions of *social* and *economic* parity between urban and rural areas as a basis for sound democratic life. These questions will be much more to the fore in the future and the authors' viewpoint should be carefully considered. Economic parity has come in for some harsh political mauling, but democratic justice has a way of insisting on unresolved problems staying to the fore. The authors' discussion needs more than a simple reading. There must be concerned thought until leaders are able to give a clear expression of basic truth, and the needed guidance for right social action.

Someone has said; "Nothing is more dangerous to civilization than science without culture." It might be added that culture itself proves dangerous when it becomes a fetish or prejudice. The only cure for these dangers is objective information and understanding. Such comes only as a result of obeying the well planned prods of life experiences and able thinkers. Kolb and Brunner have given in this text a guide by which to study our rural culture. That this culture is rich and vital they make clear. Its weaknesses are considered, and grounds for needed changes are presented. Growing trends are made pointed. Here is a scientific study which interprets, supports and gives vision to culture.—***A. J. Walton.***

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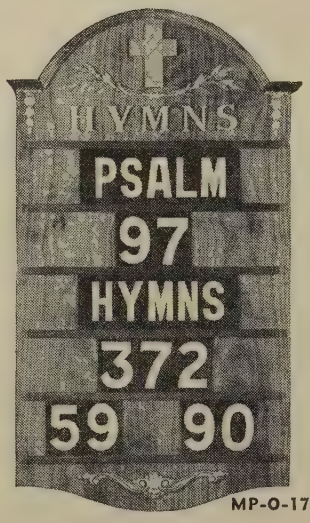

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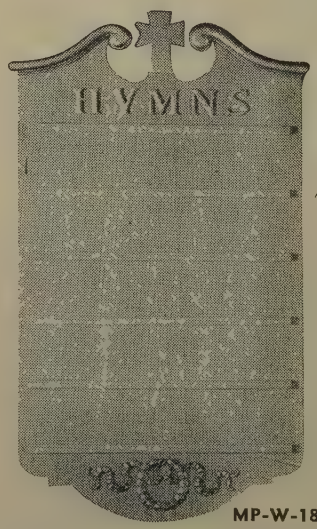

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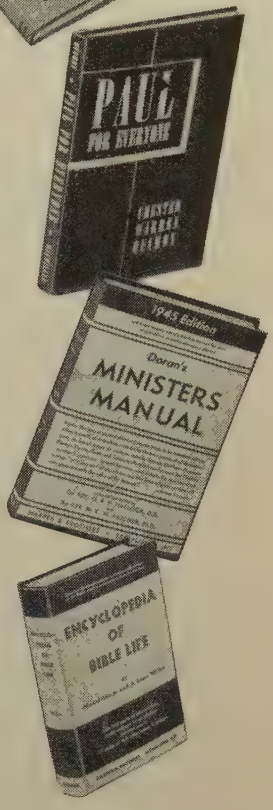

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Concerning War and Mental Health

THE WAR AND MENTAL HEALTH IN ENGLAND, *by James M. Mackintosh. The Commonwealth Fund, 91 pp., 85 cents.*

This is a small brochure, in two parts, the first being on The Impact of War, the second on Mobilization for Peace. Part I is divided into five chapters, in which the author discusses the bitter process of adjustment which the British people had to make during the period of 1939 to 1940. He describes the courage with which the British faced the situation, and also some of the things left undone which might have been done. There were not so many nervous breakdowns, but there was a great increase in the number of cases of gastric and duodenal ulcers. During this war, anxiety shows itself in this way rather than in the old so-called "shell-shock." The author shows that although the work of the government for helping people was fairly well organized, it lacked color and gaiety. People became too much depressed under the drab circumstances of war.

The author discusses the difficulty of evacuating the children and the problem of finding the right home for each child. It is a curious fact that many children do better under the bombing attacks, if with their parents, than they do away from the parents in some quiet rural home.

In the chapter on "The Lonely Year," 1940-41, the author discusses people's reactions to air raids and the effect of lack of sleep, and fatigue. One of the things that sustained the British people was their ability to believe that they could not be defeated, and the author points out that "it is the mind of its people that weaves the destiny of the race." But there are many mental wounds that occurred during those terrible years that will show themselves in peacetime.

The year 1941-1942 was the year of defense, preparation, and alliance. With the entry of America into the war and the arrival of American troops, the spirits of the people rose.

The year 1942-1943 was "The End of the Beginning." The author points out that although the British people were urged not to take vacations, the tension was so great that they did so anyway, and that possibly it was for the best. He also discusses the problems caused by the breaking up of families due to evacuation, and the fact that children began to show bad results in many cases; but, on the other hand, the older children of the upper classes suffered neither more nor less due to evacuation than if they had been sent to boarding schools in peacetime.

Part II deals with "Mobilization for Peace" and the author discusses the need for organizing the social work and medical and psychiatric services so that adults and children can have the benefit of the very best that science has discovered for their help.

This little book is beautifully written and well organized. It is a fine contribution toward solving the problems of this war.—***Smiley Blanton.***

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Thirty Years In a Chinese Heaven

HEAVEN BELOW, by E. H. Clayton. Prentice-Hall. 282 pp., $2.75.

Chinese spectators, entranced with the purple glow of hills at evening, often exclaimed, "There is nothing in all the world like this!" Hangchow, pride of the nation for a thousand years, had its incomparable beauty; for it was a city fronted by parks and framed in hills. There was West Lake, with its green islands and awning-covered boats at the city's edge, and on the southern shore stood Old Thunder Peak Pagoda, guardian for centuries of the people's liberty. There were ancient temples where in the spring the people brought baskets of snakes and related incredible myths of Transmigrated Life. Especially intriguing was Ling Yin, the "must" among temples, where forty-foot idols presented three different manifestations of Buddha, and where the Goddess of Mercy stood on the head of a crocodile.

But there was also something ugly about Hangchow. The streets were so narrow that one could touch the buildings on either side. At the entrance to many of the streets were rows of open privies. The city was infested with thousands of homeless dogs that spread disease abroad because ardent Buddhists would not allow the destruction of life. Housewives did their laundry in the city water supply. Iron smoke stacks spoiled the beauty of pleasant landscapes. Country girls dipped parboiled, shriveled hands into scalding water to collect strands of silk to keep the weaving industry going. At the City Temple, seat of the God of Wealth, beggars lifted leprous fingers to grasp for alms and old garments. "Heaven Below" had scenes just as terrible as the five-foot ideographs in the temple which showed the punishment meted out to sinners in the indescribable Buddhist hell.

To Hangchow, the Claytons, Baptist missionaries, came in 1923, after nine years already in China. *Heaven Below* describes their rich and varied life until they were interned by the Japanese after Pearl Harbor.

The Claytons saw their five children loved and protected by faithful Chinese friends. They also lived in terror at times because they knew how much their children liked Chinese food—food which was not always clean, but food which the hospitable Chinese gave generously because they loved the little foreigners. Mr. Clayton attended feasts where three persons with contagious diseases were eating with him from the same bowl. "You wouldn't do it? Maybe not, but you would have to if you expected to remain and work in China."

The Claytons saw the rise of Chinese nationalism, the coming of the Communists, and the founding of the Republic. They were thrilled by the zeal of young Chinese, who, boasting to the world that they would save China, started programs of public health and education and enforced justice in the courts. The Claytons saw the renewed interest in all that the West had to offer. (Perhaps my one criticism of the book is that the author is not critical enough of some things which the West *did* offer. I wish Mr. Clayton had seen fit to say more about the industrial revolution and the future of Christianity in China.) Once the Claytons heard a band leading a funeral procession with "There'll Be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight" and a wedding march with "Onward Christian Soldiers, Marching as to War"!

In 1937, war came to "Heaven Below." Then Wayland Academy, Mr. Clayton's school, became a refuge for the starved and homeless. Japanese soldiers looted and burned homes all around the mission. At all hours of the night, Chinese women and girls ran in delirium to the mission and beat upon the gates pleading for entrance. Coolies were killed for protesting assaults upon their wives, and women were bayonetted for resisting. Whole villages were set to the torch. China had many "Lidices."

But, concludes Mr. Clayton, "It is a gross injustice to the Japanese to say they never did *anything* to benefit China; by their systematic starvation of the people, they forced them to devour every dog and cat in the city."

Opium was introduced. It could be bought by anyone in shops labeled, "Bureau for the Cure of the Opium Habit." Brothels flourished. "A drinking shop was started directly across the street from our refuge. We talked to the Chinese proprietor about the dangers to his own countrywomen in the refuge, but he was a businessman; the women were not his concern." (To the credit of the missionaries and their brave Chinese neighbors, the shop was closed.)

Life in Hangchow reached "the limit of bitterness." Hungry women committed suicide. Children wandered like droves of wolves about the streets, assaulting convoys of hand trucks and taking grain from the guards. The Chinese underground organized effective resistance.

Meanwhile real Christianity in Hangchow was in the catacombs, and martyrs' blood was running in the streets—blood ultimately to become the seed of the new Church in China. Catholics assisted Baptists and Baptists assisted Catholics. With unmatched heroism, the Christians threw themselves against the tides of death and despair.

In the army of occupation was Lieutenant K. who, though a Japanese officer, worked heroically to make conditions as humane as possible. He turned his head when forbidden grain was given to starving people. He arrested looters and attempted to protect the weak. He had been educated in a Christian school in Japan.

And so the days and years passed. The Claytons were brought back to America on the Gripsholm. But they will return, believing that the "future of the world depends upon the future of Christianity in China."

Some books are like sermons. They are not always intended to be enjoyed. If we enjoy some books, there is something very much wrong with us. *Heaven Below*, like gospel sermons, stabs the conscience. The book is not missionary propaganda. It contains no direct appeals for anything. But *Heaven Below* presents a good story for any layman or preacher. It is a book to be read just before official boards debate how best to install softer cushions and pews for spineless backs in comfortable churches! We could underscore, for reading aloud, sentences like this: "One thousand children were turned away hungry."—***Woodrow Geier.***

Religion on the Fighting Fronts

AND GOD WAS THERE, *by Chaplain Eben Cobb Brink, Westminster Press, 92 pp., $1.*

The title intrigued me. The fact that it was written by a chaplain who had trained with men in American camps, had shipped on a transport with them to Ireland, then to England and on to Africa and there had gone through with them their first baptism of fire promised some sidelights on how our men react spiritually during this war. Do they under fire turn to God and then promptly forget Him when danger passes? Some do. But there are many others who seek and find Him in times of training, in days of preparation for sailing, on board the ship and amid the strangeness of unfamiliar people and scenes.

How do men in khaki find God? The chaplain does not tell of any mystical apparitions happening along battle lines. Men find God, as they always have, through faith. Often the chaplain and his men learned that God dwells not in temples made with hands but wherever a man finds Him or shares His presence with another man.

The book aids in answering the question "How did men find God?" and also reveals the deep-seated desire these sons of ours have for Him. We may be grateful for chaplains who are helping them in their quest. So many went to war, men in body but veritable children in spirit, with knowledge of prayer limited to "Now I lay me down to sleep." Were they to blame for this arrested growth? Some of these boys when they return will want to "grow in grace." These words of a sergeant, "Unless the churches back home forget unnecessary things and just make people think about God, they won't hold us when we get back," ought to be pondered.

This book and others like it are important for those who would minister wisely to returning soldiers. Servicemen will not talk about their war experiences but the record of them will be written deeply in mind and soul.—***John O. Gross.***

Life's Danger Zones

[*Continued from page 19*]

Most of all we find this truth apparent in spiritual life. On easy Street and in the lap of luxury there are many dangers for the soul. Sometimes I have wondered why God spared the devil. He could have killed him, but He didn't. I think he serves as a dumb-bell by means of which the soul may develop spiritual and moral muscle. He makes a fine punching-bag. *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation.* The word temptation here means *trials.*

I can think of no greater contrast than that between the eagle and the oyster. What makes the difference? The eagle *struggles and strives,* while the oyster *slips and slides.* The one fights his way up, while the other slides his way down.

What shall be your attitude toward easy street? Don't covet it, either for yourself or for your children, and it may be best for all concerned that you refuse to move on it, or even, if already established there, that you deliberately move off.

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H. G. WELLS' *Rag-tag, Bob-tail Collection*

CRUX ANSATA, *by H. G. Wells. Agora Publishing Company, 113 pp., $1.25.*

Here is a curious rag-tag and bob-tail collection of cullings from the history of the Church and pamphleteering paragraphs which will not enhance Mr. Wells' reputation as a writer and historian. The famous *Outline of History*, which came from his pen over twenty-five years ago, ended up by being, in spite of the jibes of professional historians, a very respectable and useful piece of work.

Crux Ansata, however, has little either in manner or matter to commend it. "I am now nearly seventy-seven," says Mr. Wells, "and I was brought up in a home in which everything, carpets, beds and all, except for a muslin curtain or two, had been bought (second hand) at sales." He did not so intend it of course, but the first part of this statement, taken literally, perhaps explains, as the second part, taken symbolically, might well describe, the shortcomings of this book. A mind which not once, but several times, rides into "an indictment of Catholicism," a private hobby like the multiple authorship of Shakespeare's works, and introduces a trivial irrevelance like the origin of the 18th century British marching song, "Lillibullero" is no longer in the prime of those powers which produced the *Outline*, which, whatever its minor shortcomings, was characterized by a sense of proportion and wholeness. As for the other defect, the bulk of this book is borrowed. Much of the historical part is taken, without quotation marks, almost word for word from Mr. Wells' own *Outline*. He has also borrowed freely, and here he gives full credit, from John Richard Green's *Short History of the English People*.

Mr. Wells does not explain the Latin part of the title, which, following a well-established English custom, he has used for his book. The *crux ansata*, literally, "cross with a handle" is a "T" cross with a loop on the middle of the top bar. It is one of the many forms of the cross recognized in Christian symbolism. This particular form, however, goes well back beyond Christian times through the Greeks and Phoenicians to the Egyptians, and is found in the sacred symbolism of their varied religions. Its earliest occurrence seems to have been among the Egyptians by whom it was called the "Ankh." It represented to them the "key of life." In view of this symbolic versatility, Mr. Wells may have chosen it for the title of his book as representing his opinion, which appears both here and in the *Outline*, that Christianity is just one form of many religions, with nothing unique about it, scarcely more than the sum of earlier component parts which it borrowed and put together in a new way. "Theocrasia," he calls it, a mingling of the gods. Or it may be that he took the word "handle" in a figurative sense, meaning occasion or opportunity. The ever-useful Messrs. Lewis and Short tell us in their Latin Dictionary that the Latins themselves so used it, and that it occurs in such phrases as *ansas ad reprehendendum dare* "to give handles for censure."

If such was his thought, Mr. Wells uses in his indictment all the usual "handles" and some unusual ones. He bears down on the forcible extrusion of heresies, the Inquisition and its horrors, the superstitions of the Middle Ages, their poor sanitation and crude dentistry. Though it is hard to see why the Catholic Church should be held responsible for all of these, they all come in for unfavorable notice. He sneers at "the shrewd, pompous, irascible, disillusioned and rather malignant old men who manifestly constituted the prevailing majority in the councils of the Church." The high and healthful features of Church history are not entirely overlooked, for Mr. Wells professes admiration for "the idea of one universal rule of righteousness keeping the peace of the earth," an ideal which lay behind it all. He admires, too, such services as the Benedictines performed in keeping alive the light of learning. He cannot withhold admiration when he speaks of St. Francis of Assisi, or even, after a somewhat grudging fashion, when St. Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus, comes under his view. But on the whole, the historical part of the book resembles nothing quite so much as a small boy doing a hop-skip-and-jump with the express purpose of landing in as many muddy puddles as possible.

There are, as is perhaps inevitable in such a work, errors of historical detail, but there are also some splendid phrases, and some incisive characterizations. One of his dicta about the Medieval Church is not only just, but memorable: "She whose duty it was to teach, chose to compel." The story of Ignatius Loyola is as well done in two pages as I have seen it done in many a longer treatise; and the thumbnail sketch of John Donne, for all that it is a little malicious, is a gem.

The indictment of the Catholic Church seems to be motivated by Mr. Wells' opinion that the Catholic Church has waged "a curious conflict from the time of the Reformation onward . . . in order to recover its ascendancy over Britain." This struggle he believes is still being waged: "There has been a Catholic Blitzkrieg upon Britain during the immense stresses of the war." But there is a strange lack of factual data in support of this conclusion. The nearest he comes to furnishing some is when he makes some scornful but hazy remarks about the "United Christian Front" which was active in England in 1938. It was, he intimates as concerned about investments as about Christianity. Name-calling takes the place of argument here. Pope Pius XII, he says, "tied himself irrevocably to the Axis" while he was still Cardinal Pacelli. He is "the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Pontiff," "the Shinto Catholic Pope."

It is, I think, indisputable that the Vatican's behind-the-scenes maneuvering encouraged the Fascist adventure in

Ethiopia and the Franco attack on Republican Spain. That we do not condone, any more than does Mr. Wells—but that is a different thing from saying the present Pope has tied himself irrevocably to the Axis. And we seem to remember that Britain at least threw no obstacles in the way of those two adventurers; that the United States sold scrap iron to Japan; that Mr. Wells' own government, by her policy of appeasement at Munich, at least indirectly made possible the Russo-German non-aggression pact of 1939. Behind most of these moves lay the same motive which was behind the Vatican's course: persistent dread of, and opposition to, Bolshevist Russia.

It is absurd, therefore, to say on the above grounds that there is a Nazi-Fascist-Shinto-Vatican alliance, or that the present Pope has never raised his voice against the Axis. Rome is much more "the eternal neutral" as G. A. Borgese has put it. It is true that there is not, and cannot be, any fundamental ideological sympathy between an authoritarian Catholicism and democracy; but there can be as little permanent alliance between a totalitarian church and totalitarian states. Our contemporary Caesars are more like the persecuting Diocletian than the Constantine who came to terms with the Church, and the present Pope could hardly be so much less percipient than his predecessors as not to be aware of that fact.

Mr. Wells is perturbed by dogmatism wherever he finds it; the Puritan Cartwright comes in for blame as heavy as does the Inquisition itself. Mr. Wells' protest against dogmatism backed by pains and penalties needs to be made, but this time his momentum carried him farther than the situation warrants.—***Richard M. Cameron.***

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BOOKS briefly noted

FOUR SERMONS, ***by Kaj Munk. Translated from the Danish by John M. Jensen. Lutheran Publishing House, 36 pp., $.25.***

The courageous preaching of Denmark's martyred playwright and pastor.

MARTIN NIEMOELLER: HERO OF THE CONCENTRATION CAMP, ***by Basil Miller. Zondervan Publishing House, 161 pp., $1.25.***

A "sketchy" biography of the famous German pastor who defied Hitler's new order for the Church. The difficulties of the author's task, under present conditions, are all too apparent.

THE MESSAGE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, ***by Archibald M. Hunter. Westminster Press, 122 pp., $1.***

There is, says the author, "a deep unity in the New Testament, which dominates and transcends all the diversities." His book tries to show the lines along which the unity is to be found. Emphasis is laid upon the synthetical approach to New Testament study in this popular and scholarly exposition. The author, a Presbyterian minister, is former professor of New Testament Greek and Exegesis at Mansfield College, Oxford.

COMMON ERRORS IN ENGLISH AND HOW TO AVOID THEM, ***by Alexander M. Witherspoon. New Home Library, 344 pp., $.69.***

This book is designed as a guide to correct usage, pronunciation, and spelling. Its arrangement makes possible quick and easy reference. Almost two-thirds of the book are devoted to a section defining correct meaning of words and phrases frequently misused. For example, distinctions are made between the often confused phrases *in the light of* and *in view of, at fault* and *in fault,* and *sympathy for* and *sympathy with.*

Other sections consider correct pronunciation and correct spelling with rules and aids and cautions for each. There are also brief sections on the correct pronunciation and spelling of proper names, and familiar foreign words and phrases. Each section is arranged alphabetically, and there are few cross references to delay one in finding what he wants quickly.

THE RELEVANCE OF THE BIBLE, ***by H. H. Rowley. Macmillan Company, 192 pp., $1.75.***

The Professor of Semitic Languages in the University College of North Wales shows that the Bible is urgently relevant to our modern world, and that modern scholarship is not inimical to the spiritual understanding and use of the Bible. The approach is non-technical.

THE STORY OF THE SACRED HARP, ***by George Pullen Jackson. Vanderbilt University Press, 46 pp., $1.***

This volume purports to give a brief survey of the rise and development of a unique type of religious music which exerted a not inconsiderable influence during the last century. Its waning popularity has been fought sedulously by Dr. Jackson, who not only has written extensively on the subject, but has also affiliated himself strongly with the groups which preserve the tradition.

To those pastors who live in communities where this practice still exists, this book may be of value in giving them an historical perspective of the movement. As a companion volume to the Sacred Harp books themselves, it gives very little source material for the actual music. Its greatest value therefore would seem to be in developing an insight into the religious developments in this country which were responsible for the appearance of the music.—***Claude Almand.***

POSTWAR PROBLEMS. ***Papers presented in a conference at Vanderbilt University, March 1-3, 1944. Vanderbilt University Press, 146 pp., $1.50.***

This book is a compilation of papers delivered at Vanderbilt University before a conference on postwar problems in business, education, and government. Dr. O. C. Carmichael, Chancellor of Vanderbilt, says in the Introduction, "Two significant notes or frames of reference impressed the observer throughout the three-day sessions: (1) freedom, and (2) responsibility. The preservation of freedom and the meeting of responsibility were emphasized, whether the speaker was a business man, an educator, or a government official."

The Minister's Private Devotions

[*Continued from page 13*]

listen to the conversation, look with terror at the huge herd of swine that plunge over the precipice into the sea. You watch the Master while he puts his firm hand upon the man's shoulder to strengthen him in his new sanity and integration and you take in what the crowd says about the whole incident.

After you have visualized the gospel passage in this way, think about its implication for you. What light does it shed upon God's will?

Are the channels of your life open to receive the healing energy of God? What do you need to do regarding the matter? One might also come to the conclusion that human life was infinitely more important than economic values in the eyes of God. Let two thousand swine perish if necessary, in order that one human life might be saved! What does that mean for you?

Then allow your feelings to respond to the stimuli of this great gospel. Let wonder take possession of you: wonder at the healing miracle of integration, at the serene strength of Jesus, at the goodness of God! Let gratitude overcome you: gratitude for the fact that you live in a world where these things are possible.

At this point you will want to kneel at your chair while you share with God whatever may be on your mind and in your heart. Thank Him for the specific things which recently have brought you joy. Confess those sins which recently you have committed, and earnestly beseech His forgiveness. Ask Him for the things you need, being careful to state the reasons why you think you need them. Interceed for others: the members of your family, the needy members of your parish, your church, your nation, the peace of the world. Rededicate yourself to God and to his service by specific commitments.

Be quiet for a few minutes to give God's Holy Spirit an opportunity to speak again to you. Let your whole being be sensitive to the impressions of that lovely moment. Be ready to act upon the new insights and promptings which may come to you then. When your silence has ended, repeat the Lord's Prayer and arise.

If you will regularly use this rule of prayer, let us say three or four times a week, presently you will find it to be an inestimable source of help. It will tie you to your mission in life and keep you a man of God. At all times you will have a sense of his radiant presence. Your life will always be open to his healing influences. Occasionally you will be granted deeply moving mystical experiences which make you intensely aware of God and lift you up for days with unspeakable happiness. This is the solid devotional rock upon which many a ministry has been built.

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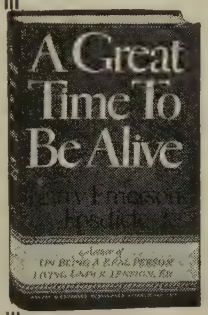

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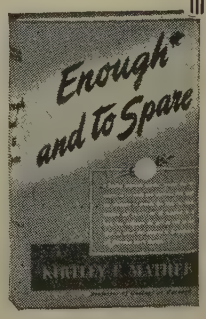

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TO MAKE *A Reading Church . . .*

BY N. CLIFFORD BANGHAM

FOR some years we have had the feeling that churches would be greatly helped if a considerable number of the membership could be persuaded to do regular reading. Members would also be benefited personally by being led into a broader view of the church and personal religious experience. To this end, more than a year ago our church planned a very detailed four month's reading program. It was made a part of the Lenten program, but was to be the first of a semi-annual occurrence.

The expense of the program as outlined seemed prohibitive. Our church has nearly seven hundred members, with the church school adding considerably more adults. So we cut the expense to one-eighth by planning two sets of reading materials and with classes of comparative sizes being paired. Half way through the period the classes exchanged sets.

Sets were divided into packets of from two to four pieces according to sizes. Also, during each half-period (two months) each class read and exchanged packets within each class every two weeks. All dates were scheduled definitely on the envelopes containing the materials. In this way each packet served eight families, thus making it possible to use a wider variety of materials and better selections at less expense. Thirty-five copies of each item in both sets was ample for the estimated 300 families who it was hoped would participate. Even on this plan the expense for the sixteen week's program was around forty dollars, the adult classes sharing the expense. Some free missionary and stewardship materials from our Methodist boards at Chicago and New York were used.

To prevent duplication in the same homes we made the rule that where both husband and wife, or adult child, were in attendance the wife or mother would be responsible through her own class for getting and returning each packet at the end of each two week's period.

To read about the plan may make it seem too complicated for the average church. Ours is quite an average church with only a few persons who have had even a high school education. Yet the plan worked almost perfectly, with no noticeable confusion.

Reading materials covered a wide area of religious interest: missions, stewardship, worship, personal devotional life, the church, church finance, Christian fellowship, temperance, the home, prayer, faith, peace, etc. Materials were obtained from our Methodist boards, from other denominational and independent sources, and from the Federal Council of Churches, including the woman's auxiliary.

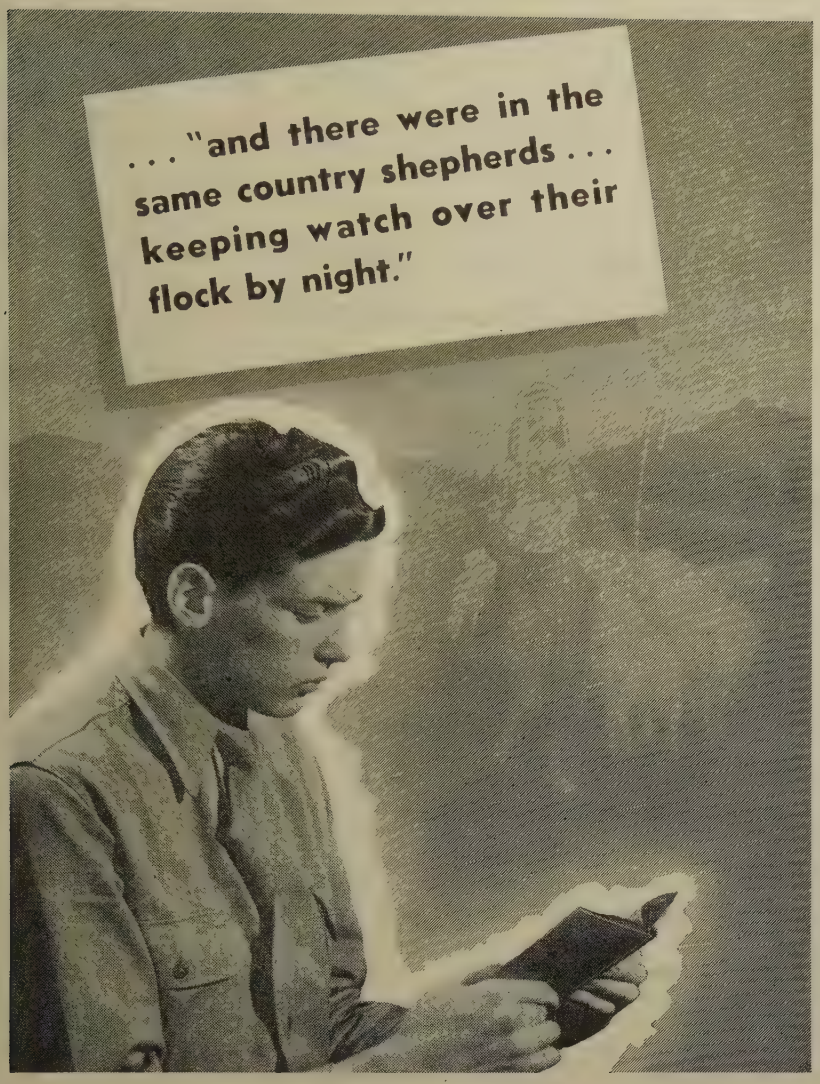
We were more than pleased with results. Many people who we felt were not accustomed to much reading, especially religious, followed the program clear through the four months. Some read spasmodically but even this was a distinct gain. There were many expressions of satisfaction and requests for a continuance of the program.

Although the somewhat complicated plan here described worked without apparent confusion, yet it did involve a lot of work for the pastor in setting it up since secretarial help was not available. A simpler plan has since been used with a rack of reading materials available at all times. Almost every Sunday several persons before and after the services may be seen returning and exchanging materials. We request the return of pieces read to keep down the expense. Badly wrinkled pieces are removed. We do not hesitate to use materails published with other denominational and independent names attached so long as it suits our purpose. Materials in the rack are changed frequently, so the supply does not get to looking stale even though the pieces may remain as good as ever. The best of them are returned to the rack again at a later date. We feel it is quite important to keep the reading rack looking fresh and inviting at all times with the constant addition of new pieces. The available supply is almost unlimited. Care must be used so as not to surfeit the people with too much at one time. Final left-overs are kept and distributed to inactive members as occasion gives opportunity.

This fall we shall also have packets of from two to four pieces sold to readers at cost, thus putting the expense directly upon the readers.

Along with the first plan mentioned above we provided a loan library of some of the smaller and easier read books. The results were disappointing since only a few availed themselves of the privilege. It did prove, however, that folks who will not read books will read small leaflets and pamphlets. In the long run the amount read will be considerable. Included in all our reading programs have been our Methodist periodicals. We have also used the new *Adult Membership Manual.* Whatever plan we follow, we aim to keep the value of religious reading before our people constantly. New readers are regularly being cultivated.

Finances have improved in both current expenses and missions. How much of it is due to the reading program and how much to increased incomes and better planned financial canvasses is difficult to say. Church attendance has remained about constant and the church school has held its own. But the city's largest industry works seven days a week and changes shifts at noon on Sundays. New war industries with extra working hours have come to the city. So it is impossible to judge fairly at this time what results in attendance have accrued. We do not feel that the values of the reading program are immediately startling, but we do feel that they will be increasingly apparent over the years. More and more we hope to make ours a reading church.



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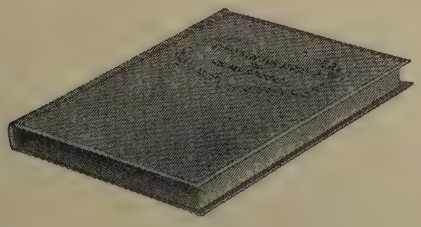

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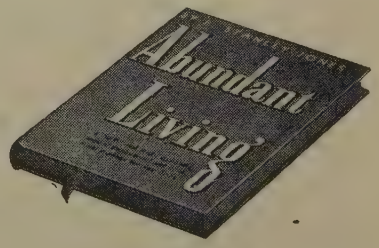

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"Beauty of worship," says Pastor Marshall, "is within our grasp. Not decoration, not ornament, but ritual and symbol out of the past which link our age with the ages gone. . . ." The supreme symbol will be, of course, the Cross of Christ which will point the way to Man's highest humanity.

CONSTANTINE the Great adopted for his slogan the words: "Hoc Signo Vinces." meaning, "By this sign conquer." The cross became the symbol of his faith. Perhaps in his superstitious mind it became more than that. It may have been that he invested the symbol with magic power. That has ever been the fate of symbols. From reminding men of greater things they themselves come to be adored as the source of power. But Constantine was not the first to use the cross as a symbol of his faith. It had become common among the Christians, for it was the badge of their Master's shame turned into glory.

The reformers, particularly in England, who, in their haste to do away with everything Romish, tore down the crosses, smashed beautiful statues and stained-glass windows, and converted stately cathedrals into barren halls, deserve our sympathy as well as our censure. They thought to do away with abuses and superstition. They believed that a church without symbols would be a church which would worship the living God without any intermediaries. They did not realize that a church without symbols was an impossibility—that men can only substitute one form of symbol for another.

I wonder if it would have halted the clerical vandals if they had known that their act of destruction would doom the Protestant Church for centuries to a barrenness of worship unequaled in most religions. The formalism of the Presbyterian system undertook to replace the light and color of the Catholic ritual. Religion became a thing of stern and cold logic. Sermons were constructed with care and heard with critical attention. Doctrinal disputations took the place of worship. Morality was in the ascendant, but it was a cold and cheerless kind of morality. What would have been the result of a combination of the reforming spirit coupled with a continuance of the worship and beauty of the old church? Perhaps the sort of religion that Lutheranism brought to Germany. Perhaps even a greater religion. But man is always prone to throw out the good with the evil.

Symbols may be used or abused. It has been the common protestant criticism of the Roman Catholics that they worship idols. That this is not true any well-read Protestant knows, but it is easy to jump to conclusions about something one knows little about. I went into a Catholic church the other day. Its slightly garish ornaments astonished me, although I am as familiar with Catholic churches as the average Protestant. But there is something about the cheerful use of gold and silver and blue which is somewhat surprising to us. We have seen too much of brown and somber-hued chancels, perhaps. The sight of the gaily colored statues of Joseph and Mary and Jesus standing about the altar seems incongruous and out of place.

The Protestant sees in these statues of the Holy Family and of the Saints only a sort of idolatry. The Catholic sees more than that. The intellectual Catholic will tell you that nothing could be farther from his mind than the worship of these statues. They are merely symbols. But if we ask him what the ignorant Italian woman who just came in thinks of them we force him to admit that perhaps the poor woman does come pretty close to identifying the symbolic with the real. He will go on to explain that the Church teaches its ignorant people by every device that it can use. Everything in the Church has a meaning. It may be hard, he says, for us to teach the ignorant the lesson of abstract duty and fidelity to a high principle. It is useless to preach about it to these people. But we can show them the pictures of the statues of the Holy Family and tell them the story of Jesus' great love, and we will have demonstrated the very teaching which we wish them to follow.

That is good logic and good psychology. As to its theology, I have nothing to say.

Intellectual Worship

We Protestants have held to an ideal without compromise. We have said that intellectual worship is the highest form of worship. Perhaps it is. We have built our services around the ideal of teaching by word of mouth the Word of God. We have believed that if we could get enough Scriptural teaching into the minds of men that their hearts would be changed. That is a fallacy. Cold intellect alone does not control man's psychic bent: We are changed, not so much by our minds, but by our emotions.

The old-time evangelists knew that. The sermons that moved men were never masterpieces of logic or learning. They were almost hypnotic repetitions of certain soul-stirring phrases: "Jesus Saves," "Come to Jesus," "You want peace," "Coming home," "Lord, I believe." All these were centered, not on

Christian Symbolism

BY R. P. MARSHALL

the intellect, but the emotions. Their power lay in their association in the minds of the listeners.

All these phrases bring the listener into a subjective attitude in which he is giving himself away to his wish for peace, for home, for safety. This, says the psychologist, is the natural desire of all men to return in times of stress to their mother's protecting arms. The evangelist arouses this wish, and carefully nurses it into action by means of word-symbols, every one of which has a deeper meaning to the listener. Half of his brain is asleep—the critical half. The association of words is giving him a first-class hypnotic trance, out of which he will find himself following the suggestions of the altar song, "I come, I come," and falling on his knees at the "mourner's bench."

There is nothing wrong with that method, for some people. It is sound psychology. The after-effects may not always be the best, but thousands of the greatest men and women in the Protestant churches came into a Christian experience that way. But while we have used the symbols of words in our approach to the masses, we have refused to use the symbols of art. Some will not have so much as a cross in our churches. In the non-liturgical churches, the tendency has been to make of the worship service a thing so barren of beauty and devoid of external symbol that without the highest degree of enthusiasm on the part of the listeners and of ability on the part of the preacher the whole thing falls flat.

True, many congregations have grown so used to trite discussions of outworn themes by ill-educated men that they are only dimly aware of any lack. For those who go to church from a sense of duty almost any sort of service will fill the bill. The minister can easily spot those who are of this type. They come into sanctuary with a dutiful expression. They sit smugly through the sermon with a faraway look in their eyes, and at the expiration of the hour they go home relieved of their burden of duty. If one asks them concerning their appreciation of the services, the answer may be, "Yes, I always go to church. My old mother always made me go when I was a child."

Ritualism may be abused. It has been, frequently. Whenever the Church has lost its spiritual power, it has clung all the closer to its ritual. Thus it has often seemed that ritual is the cause of coldness and apostasy, when it is only the consequence. Ritualism as an "ism" is deadly because it is the result of death, the death of enthusiasm and genuine piety, but ritual is an aid to faith when the Church has life in itself. Ceremonies cannot bring life, but they may express it.

The days of barren worship services are numbered. Even in the most extreme of nonconformist churches, where the fear of anything approaching the Romish attitude is almost a phobia, here and there we find churches which have dared to enrich (as they call it) their worship to the point where they are introducing—in the name of beauty, rather than of symbolism—crosses, processionals, and robes for clergymen. Some congregations have objected, laymen being more conservative than ministers, but the tide has moved onward. In thousands of Methodist churches you will find the pulpit displaced from its nineteenth-century place as the center of attention, and the communion table raised to the middle of the platform, surmounted by a cross and candles. The minister has taken a subordinate place at one side.

And why not? Too long we have depended upon the ministers to do all the work of teaching. It is impossible to reach the whole man by means of only one avenue of approach. The ear can grow weary, the mind may wander. If there is nothing upon which to center the attention except the gyrations of a clergyman attired, perhaps, in clothes of dubious taste and cut, there is left an aching void which might better be filled by means of symbolic carving on the communion table, or a cross.

There is good psychology in the practice of some Protestant churches which place a cross upon the communion table, standing at the highest point of the platform and in the center. The eye naturally seeks such a point. A gilded cross holds the attention. Its symbolism is religious. It means something. The minister may be dull, but the cross has its message.

I have said that we cannot do away with symbolism in some form or another. There is the symbolism in our hymns. The meaning of many of our religious expressions is not on the surface; it is known only to the initiate. "There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Immanuel's veins," is the crudest sort of imagery if taken literally. But to the elderly Christian who once found an experience of religion listening to this old song it brings up memories that thrill the very depths of his being.

"Jesus, Lover of My Soul" expresses an amatory view that is especially displeasing to students of psychology and psychoanalysis. It can easily be criticized for its love-motif, but the simple fact is that this song means much to men and women because of its association, and not because of its words.

Similarly, every preacher of the old-school type who uses the hallowed expressions of theology such as "Washed in the blood of the Lamb," "Beulah Land," "Crossing Jordan," "The Promised Land," "Saved by grace," etc., is using symbolism in its most common form: the symbolism of words.

Our forefathers in the frontier chapels sought for beauty of worship in the only way that it was possible. They could not have carved altars—so they spoke of the great white throne as if they saw it with their own eyes before them. They could not have the symbol of the Cross—so they sang of the Cross in thousands of songs which moved the heart. Their ministers were forced to exchange their robes for the homespun suits of the pioneer farmer and woodsman—but they made up for the privation here on earth by painting gorgeous pictures of the robes they would be furnished when they got to heaven.

Such was the symbolism of words with which the sermons were filled. That was what constituted oratory: a description of the sufferings of Christ, the damnation of the wicked, and the glorification of the saints. What was this but the natural outgrowth of a desire to feel and touch reality—to see in imagination, not with the eye, the symbols of their faith? In a Catholic church they would have been furnished a graphic representation of the suffer-

ings of Jesus; they would have seen Him writhing on the cross. They would have seen the carvings of angels upon the sanctuary. They would have been able to touch the statues of the Holy Family.

II

Protestants have much to learn in the use of symbolism. But first there must come an understanding of what we wish to accomplish. Is it merely that we desire to ornament our churches as we adorn our homes or our theaters? There is something that is deeper than this. Mere adornment will not produce the reverential attitude. For years our churches have spent time and money arranging floral decorations, but when we go into the church we see only flowers, They are nothing more than decoration. They may be beautiful, but they do not mean anything. There is no easily understood connection between the decoration and the attitude of worship. An altar banked with flowers is sometimes beautiful—and sometimes not—but it is never really symbolic. The connection is more apparent between flowers and death than between flowers and life.

There is a difference between the attitude of decoration and the attitude of worship. Flowers are seldom placed in a Protestant church to honor God—they are there to be seen by the people. That, in itself, settles the matter. Nothing which has for its only motive the pleasing of man will ever induce the mood of worship. Man must be forgotten. Thus, in the Catholic Mass, the priest turns his back upon the congregation; he never depends upon his audience for inspiration. In fact, to him there is no audience. He is performing an act of adoration to God. If there were no people present in the church he would not be embarrassed in the performance of his duty. While the preacher sometimes seeks a crowd and its approval, the true priest seeks only God and his approval.

This is the difference between objective and subjective worship. In the former, the priest, on behalf of the people and with them, is seeking to communicate with God, to affect Him in some manner. In the latter type, the motive is to induce into the congregation some attitude or belief. One expects to worship God, the other to affect man. The Catholics and Anglo-Catholics form their ritual around the objective method of worship. They are not interested in converting, by the worship service, those who attend the Mass or the Morning or Evening Prayer. That is another job for another time. Here the priest is leading them to the foot of the cross in the prayers and adorations, but this is only the unconscious result of his conscious act, which is merely worship. Here, only, the line between subjective and objective worship is almost crossed. An effect is made upon the worshiper which is sometimes greater than the effect of the subjective worship designed expressly for the purpose of causing him to resolve to do a certain thing.

The subjective type of worship is found mainly in the Protestant church. Here a definite effort is made to change men—their attitudes, their emotions. But, strange to say, it is sometimes less effective than the objective method, which accomplishes the same result through indirection.

A characteristic of the objective type is the belief in the presence of God within the sanctuary. He is there, not merely in the sense that He is everywhere, but He is present in the Host, which is the sacramental bread, and which is preserved in its place, usually designated by the presence of a red light burning day and night. The Catholic looks for this and feels comforted. God is there in the wafer which has been consecrated by the priest and thereby miraculously transformed into the very body of our Lord. This belief has a tendency toward superstition, but it is, nevertheless, the basis of reverence and faith.

Protestantism, with its disbelief in the Real Presence, cannot hope to gain the effect of worship by means of decorations that the Catholic secures through this belief. But perhaps it is well that we do not have the same attitudes. There are millions of men and women who are by nature and training unable to believe the doctrine of Transubstantiation. To these, the forms of worship which presuppose such a belief will always seem incredible and without substance. For these, the service of the Catholic Church can have no deep appeal, except as it gratifies their desire for beauty and ritual.

What can be done for those who cannot accept the Catholic view and yet who are dissatisfied with the traditional barrenness of worship which has been the curse of the American Protestant churches? Can we form a service which will satisfy the intellect as well as the longing for beauty and heart-warming appeal? It is being done in many churches today, after a fashion. The chancels of the most anti-ritualistic churches are being arranged after the traditional manner, not of Catholicism, but of the next-of-kin to Catholicism—the Church of England.

By means of every legitimate appeal to the sense of beauty the churches are attempting to come close to the line which divides the objective worship from the subjective. They are deliberately trying to influence men into an attitude of worship by the use of some of the trappings of the objective type. It is a subjective goal with an objective method. Even incense is used in many Protestant churches today. Processionals, choir boys, robes, and glorious color combinations are coming back into the churches of the Reformation. Lutherans are making more of the celebration of the Mass. Episcopalians—even those who are not of the High-Church wing—are giving free rein to their ritualistic tendencies. Methodists are adopting the old forms of ritual which have been allowed to grow stale and rusty from lack of use.

The semi-circular chancel and the corner pulpit have about disappeared from the modern church. So have organ pipes, which are now hidden from view. The organist, who formerly occupied the seat of honor above the minister, where all his contortions could be watched by the congregation, has now retired to an unseen niche, or even to the rear gallery. The mechanics of worship are not now the most important parts of the service. Pulpit prayers, as they are called, are much shorter and more to the point. Many ministers are reading the ancient prayers of the Church in preference to a rambling effort of their own. Songs of dubious imagery and more dubious musical merit have been replaced by the old hymns of the Church. The "special," which, I believe, has been more of a hindrance than a help to the musical part of the worship service, is being deprived of its place of importance, and in some cases left off entirely. Some choir directors are concentrating their efforts upon the goal of worshipful singing of the great hymns and chants in the regular service, and they are leaving to the special musical services, Vespers or Evensong, the anthems which formerly graced the morning worship.

Although it is not in the best of tradition, I believe that the church of the future will make more of congregational singing. Not, as it is sometimes practiced, with a whirling-dervish effect from a so-called leader who believes that worship and enthusiasm can

be pumped up by means of physical exertion, but, with no emphasis upon the mechanics of leading and no deliberate attempt to foster a certain attitude, the pastor and choir will sing the great songs of Christian life in such a way that the congregation will join in as they join in the Creed and the Prayer.

Silence can be used more effectively than it has ever been used heretofore. We seem to be afraid to be silent. I have heard ministers announce a period of silent prayer, and then in a moment, begin hastily to pray aloud, seeming embarrassed by the lack of noise. But people need to be silent. Seldom can I pray with the minister who prays extempore. He is so consciously speaking to the people that I listen to him as if the prayer were a sermon. That is the reason that few people ever pray in church; they do not have a chance. Silence will foster the spirit of prayer. Complete silence, I mean—not "silence" with a musical background.

Of the same nature as silence are the ancient prayers which have become so familiar that we say them without thinking, or read them from the ritual. For a long time I could not understand how a Catholic could be helped by the Latin words of the Mass. Some said they really knew what the Latin meant, but others, I know, did not have more than the haziest idea. Prayerbooks, or *missals*, can be had with English translations, but they are seldom used.

Similarly, the average devout Protestant who is in the habit of saying the Creed each Sunday would be more disturbed than helped by a detailed explanation of what he really says he believes when he recites his Credo. It isn't the meaning: it's the attitude that counts. Any deviation from the usual order of words introduces an element of attention that defeats the purpose of the recital.

I am not saying that meaningless syllables have more power to move the soul than those which have intelligent implication, but I am saying that prayers and the saying of the Creed may, by their very familiarity and by their connotation, have an effect upon the subconsciousness that is greater than any appeal to the intelligence. For this reason, I believe that the substitution of a more modern form of a creed, which would seem to express better the real belief of men today, will defeat its own purpose as a help to worship. It will not assist in gaining the attitude of receptiveness; it may, by its very explicitness induce the opposite. It is very hard to frame a creed which will be universally acceptable, if taken literally.

Properly speaking, the Protestant service is in two parts. Perhaps the sermon should have been first. It is more in the nature of a preliminary than the service of song and prayer, for what we are trying to do is to assist men to worship God. The worship service is the goal, and not the road to the goal. By his sermon he may have been able to draw us close to God, so that we might truly worship Him. Would it not have been better to start the great preacher off under a cold collar, so to speak, and let him warm up to the climax of a reverent period of communion with God as expressed in the hymns and the prayers?

Whether or not that form of service is practicable, I do not know. I have never tried it. But I do know that there is a distinct break in the continuity of the average morning service. This break is usually accented by the offertory. What has gone before is in the nature of communion with God: worship. What comes after is, or at least may be, only the opinions of a man, speaking without any authority except as a man, for the authority of the Church is not recognized among us, and the authority of the Bible (which was the Reformer's substitute for the inerrancy of the Pope) has lost its power.

Beauty of worship is within our grasp. Not decoration, not ornament, but ritual and symbol out of the past which link our age with the ages gone—these are the things that count in our effort to bring our members into communion with God. What matter that many of the symbols used in the ancient church were borrowed from the worship of other religions? Why should we cavil over the use of candles because their history goes back to worship of pagan deities? Men have sought for God in all ways—they have caught a glimpse of Him, perhaps, in the teaching of Rome, of Buddha, of Confucius. They have given to us some of their devices and tools of worship. Let us take them and use them as did the Ancient Church, realizing that although we have found the Way through Jesus there were millions who participated in this world search for God, who never clearly found Him. In their memory—the memory of valiant souls who sought Him—we light the candles, we hold up the cross, and kneel before the shrine of our devotion.

Will the increased use of ritual help the church? Not unless it is imbued with the spirit of the original. All our ritual took its being from out of the hearts of men who were religious zealots. They may not always have been saints, but they were men of piety. The prayers of the Episcopal Church were written, for the most part, by men who were willing to give their lives for their belief, and some of them did that very thing.

Processions and robes will not save the Church. If the life has fled, no trappings can bring it back. Sacraments may become cerements; symbols may mean no more than seeking after the meaning that is gone. But they *can* mean far more than that.

The Cross is a symbol of more than we can put into words. It is sacrifice and service, pain and pleasure, life and death. It is love; it is hate. It is the sacrifice of a Mother and the suffering of a Son. It stands upon a hill to remind men that there are heights to which they may aspire. It looks upon a deep, dark valley to tell men of the depths to which they can sink. It is Man at His Highest. It is God at His Lowest, for here God and Man may meet.

"In this sign conquer," said the voice in the heart of Constantine. I am afraid he never understood the meaning of the sign. It is difficult for a king to know the meaning of the cross—he wears a crown! But Paul had known the meaning. Listen. *I am debtor; I am ready; I am not ashamed of the Gospel.* And they carried him to the Imperial City and left him there in bonds. But the Word was not bound. He preached from his hired house, and later from prison. But the easiest way to silence a man is to cut off his head, and they took Paul out of his prison one afternoon. They said it was the Appian Way, and their destination a great oak tree where the executions took place. But they were wrong. It was the Way of the Cross, and it was a very familiar way to Paul. Many times he had walked it, hoping to find his Master at the bend of the road. This time he was not disappointed. They said in the city that a dangerous teacher had been put to death that afternoon out at the Oak Tree. But I believe they said in Heaven, "Brother Paul at last has come home." It's a long road, sometimes, this way of the Cross, but it leads us to God.

The world is weary today, weary of all the clamor, the conflicting voices, the groans of those who suffer. The world is searching still for God. We Protestants cannot yet offer a united Church, but we can set up the Cross as our supreme symbol—as our guide board on the way to God!

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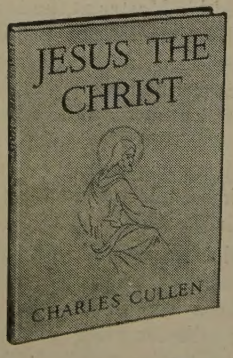

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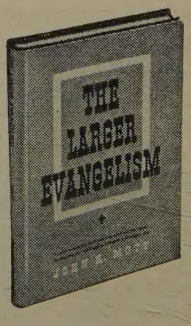

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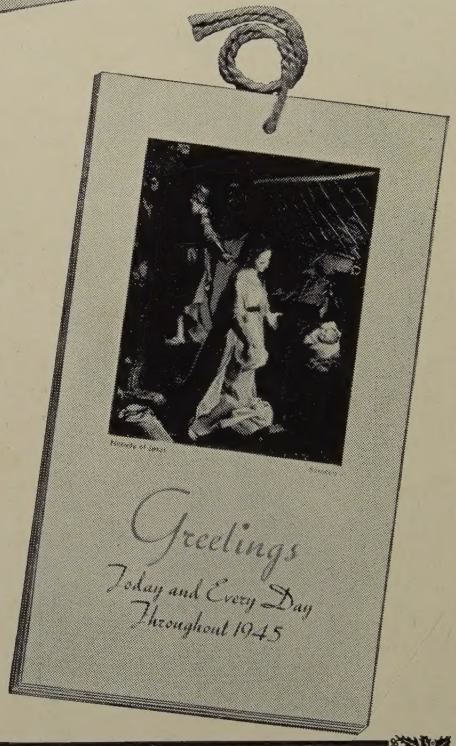

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¶ The first returns indicated a landslide! When this issue of *The Pastor* went to press, the editor had already been deluged with letters; the circulation department had been more than deluged with subscriptions. ¶ In the first four days after the October issue hit the field, more than 1,000 pastors subscribed. Other thousands mailed their subscriptions shortly afterwards. ¶ On the editor's desk are more comments about *The Pastor* than he can hope to answer. A small percentage of these comments will be published in the December and January issues. ¶ The response to the expanded magazine has been greater than we had dared hope. To the many pastors who have written messages of encouragement and best wishes, we say: In gratitude and humility, we dedicate ourselves to making *The Pastor* serve you even better in the months ahead.—Editor.